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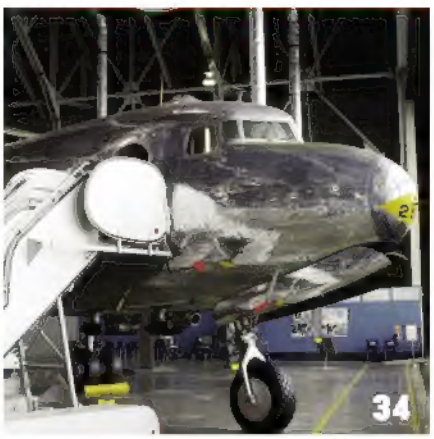

70th Anniversary
D-DAY
June 6, 1944–June 6 2014

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COVER SHOT: *First Division GIs of Company E, 16th Infantry Regiment, wade toward Normandy's Omaha Beach on D-Day, June 6, 1944. They landed after a 10-mile ride in a Higgins boat from the USS* Samuel Chase, *anchored in the English Channel. Coast guard Chief Photographer's Mate Robert F. Sargent took the photo.* NATIONAL ARCHIVES

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D (as in Déjà Vu) Day

YOU MAY HAVE HEARD THE STORY OF the world leader whose nation had lost a great war a couple of decades earlier rallying his people back from their humiliation. He eventually decided that a certain piece of a neighboring country was rightfully his because most of its inhabitants shared his ethnicity. So he sent in his troops to take it.

You might know that leader as Vladimir Putin, whose native Russia lost the Cold War and who sent his forces to the Crimean Peninsula as this issue of our magazine was going to press. Or you might know that leader as Adolf Hitler, whose Germany lost World War I and who marched his troops into Czechoslovakia to claim the Sudetenland in 1938. You're correct either way. As I write this, the outcome of Putin's action is yet to be determined. Hitler's sparked a world war.

I hope that by the time you read this, the simmering situation in Crimea has cooled down. But the ties between today and World War II are stronger than one string of events. Andrew Wiest, for example, connects D-Day with the Cold War in his essay here entitled "The First Battle of World War III."

You may be old enough to remember the tearing down of the Berlin Wall that separated Berlin's Western side from its Communist Eastern side in 1989. You probably know that the Cold War that all but ended with that symbolic event had actually begun during World War II, as tensions mounted between the Soviet Union and its Western Allies. The two sides remained united long enough to defeat Nazi Germany, but the Grand Alliance at that point was more a matter of practicality than compatibility: the enemy of my enemy is my friend.

The East-West rift was growing as the Western Allies stormed Normandy on D-Day in massive landings that Brian Murphy covers here in his article "The Fight on the Beaches." Thousands of GIs charged ashore to find more fear, despair, and death—and eventually relief—than could seemingly be crammed into one day. I wasn't there. I had more than enough trouble just watching the movie *Saving Private Ryan*. There in the safety of the theater, my chest tightened like a drumhead, and I breathed like my life was in danger, wondering how anyone on those beaches survived.

Most of the GIs on those beaches did survive—and they survived victorious. Many of them clammed up afterward, never to utter a word about what they saw, heard, and felt. Others wanted to tell the whole world. Most probably fell somewhere in between. Murphy's article is full of words of men who were there. Don't miss what they say, or what Professor Wiest says, or what Bill Gates says about his landing on Omaha Beach in our I Was There. And if you happen to run into Vladimir Putin (maybe riding through the wilds on his horse, shirtless), tell him he shouldn't miss any of this either. If history repeats itself, as they say, it can't hurt to know what it is that might be repeated.

Carl Zebrowski
Editor, *America in WWII*

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V-MAIL

GUARDING THE BEER

I WAS VERY INTERESTED IN the beer story ["Morale in a 12-Ounce Can," April 2014]. My dad was a Seabee and told us often about standing guard over the marines' giant pile of beer in Japan. He also told of Seabees stealing cans from the center of the pile so it was eventually hollowed out!

CARRIE SCHERPELZ
Madison, Wisconsin

A TRUTH TOLD IN JEST

I ENJOYED THE DECEMBER 2013 Issue of *America in WWII*. The article on WWII comics [The Funnies, "A Glow in the Dark"] reminded me of my days of reading comics in the 1960s. There was one WWII-themed comic that centered on the exploits of a US destroyer in the Pacific. I can only remember one or two storylines. One was about a dogfight between a Japanese Ki-61 Tony fighter and a US P-38 Lightning fighter. The Tony pilot was constantly trying to drop his speed to get on the tail of the P-38 (the Tony could fly very close to stalling speed). At the end of the story, the P-38 was on the Tony's tail, but the Tony "swatted" the surface of the ocean with its tail, which dropped its speed for an instant. That forced the P-38 to overshoot the Tony. The P-38 was then shot down.

A pretty tall war story? A couple years ago I picked up a book called *Nanette: Her Pilot's Love Story*, by Edwards Park (1977). It is a short book on an average fighter pilot flying in the South West Pacific area [author Park flew a Bell P-39 Airacobra fighter, battling the Japanese in New Guinea]. The author describes Japanese Tony pilots using tactics like the ones described in my old comic book.

JOHN PAULY
Buffalo, New York

ONE MAN'S VETERANS MEMORIAL

I'VE READ STORIES OF INDIVIDUALS doing amazing things for their communities. Here is a very special one. This gentleman's name is Martin Malek. His father served in World War II. Martin was very proud of him. His father died a few years ago, and Martin decided to make a memorial for him and all service persons in the area, living and dead. He kept the thought to himself and mowed lawns and shoveled snow to raise funds. After he and his brother started the project, word got around and he started to get small donations.

Martin went to different veteran organizations in the area and asked for names of personnel living and deceased to go on his memorial. He had a local business engrave the monument with every name he received. He is still taking names for future monuments.

DONALD E. HARR
Johnstown, Pennsylvania

Editor's Note: *Our hats are off to Martin Malek for this labor of love and devotion.*

US ARMY, YANK DOWN UNDER, APRIL 21, 1944

COURTESY OF TIM BINKLEY

Our April 2014 issue's pinup featuring actress Margie Stewart as a bathing beauty in an M1 helmet prompted Tim Binkley of Fort Wayne, Indiana, to send this photo of a *sleeping* beauty in a helmet. The model is his granddaughter Eden Joy, one month old and all of three pounds. The helmet is a genuine WWII M1 from Binkley's collection.

DAUNTLESS DAUNTLESS PILOTS

I SERVED IN THE NAVY between 1943 and 1946 as a combat aircrewman—an aviation radioman, second class—after attending aviation radioman school in Memphis, Tennessee. I went to aerial gunnery school at Yellow Water, Florida, then to flight training at Cecil Field, Florida. I was assigned to fly in Douglas SBD Dauntless dive bombers [the SBD stands for Scout Bomber Douglas]. My pilot was Lieutenant Robert Hoeker, US Marine Corps. After I trained with him, he was assigned to a squadron in San Diego, California. I have no knowledge where he is. He is, or was, a great guy. Maybe he can be located.

Next, since I had no pilot, I was sent to PB4Y-1 training [the PB4Y-1 was a B-24 Liberator heavy bomber, put to use as a navy patrol bomber]. From there I joined a crew in a PB4Y-2 Privateer [a modified B-24] at Crows Landing, California, in Squadron 107.

Now, really, the purpose of this letter is to complain about all the publications about World War II that never, or hardly ever, mention the great sacrifice of the men who flew the Dauntless. It practically eliminated the Japanese navy in the Pacific. To all my fellow combat aircrewmen who sacrificed their lives flying the SBD Dauntless: I will always remember the feeling of being in a wonderful aircraft with them.

GENEROSO BARNADA
wartime navy combat aviation radioman, second class
King of Prussia, Pennsylvania

Send us your comments and reactions—especially the favorable ones! Mail them to V-Mail, America in WWII, 4711 Queen Avenue, Suite 202, Harrisburg, PA 17109, or e-mail them to editor@americainwwii.com.

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MONETTA ELOYSE DARNELL—KNOWN TO US AS LINDA DARNELL—started getting attention for her looks when she was a child. By age 11, driven by an ambitious mother and claiming to be 16, she was modeling for a local department store.

As a teenager, still pushed by her mother, Darnell landed a contract with 20th Century–Fox. She moved to Hollywood in April 1939, pretending to be 17 but billed as 19. She was really 15. That December, *Life* magazine called her "the most physically perfect girl in Hollywood."

During an up-and-down career, Darnell appeared in more than 40 films and dozens of TV programs. Her portrayal of a sultry Russian peasant girl in 1944's *Summer Storm* made her a popular WWII pinup.

Darnell had a sweet disposition that moved director Henry Hathaway to rave, "A sweeter girl never lived." It was fitting that, during the war, Darnell rubbed elbows with GIs at the Hollywood Canteen, made public appearances to sell war bonds, and volunteered for the Red Cross.

But Darnell's on-screen and public persona veiled a turbulent personal life plagued by alcoholism, publicized affairs, and three failed marriages. The end of her life was no less tragic: on April 9, 1965, at age 41, she died of burns suffered in a house fire that broke out as she watched her 1940 movie *Star Dust* on TV.

PHOTO FROM THE US ARMY WEEKLY PUBLICATION *YANK DOWN UNDER*, 1944

—*Heather Burdsall*
editorial intern

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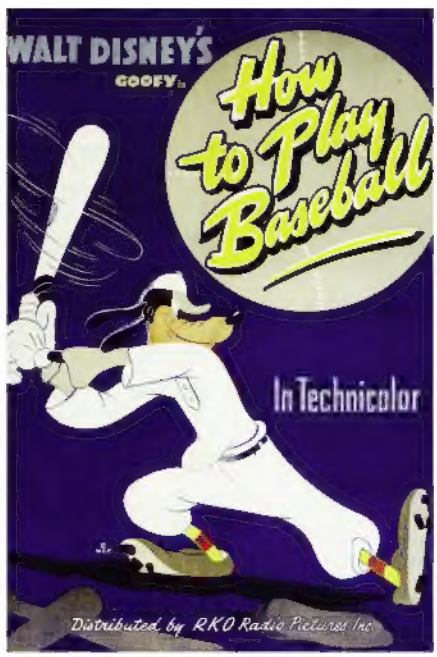
Disney's Goofy Guru

by Carl Zebrowski

CUE THE SERIOUS, deep, booming voice of a documentary narrator: "From the earliest dawn of humanity, the cold, unrelenting law of nature has been, and still is, the survival of the fittest." It was the sort of line you might expect to hear accompanying a newsreel being screened at a movie theater just after the United States had joined a war that threatened the survival of peoples and nations. But then: "Quiet!" On screen stand a couple of familiar-looking cavemen, one armed with a wooden club and the other with a stone hammer. They trade noisy blows over the head. Then it becomes clear that the cavemen are both "played" by Goofy, Disney's bumbling, talking cartoon dog. The film is the animated short *The Art of Self Defense*.

The tongue-in-cheek story moves through history from the cavemen to armored knights to dueling gentlemen and finally to 1940s boxing. Along the way the narrator offers pointers on equipment use, training, and tactics—all of which Goofy promptly screws up. Among the slapstick highlights is an oft-copied routine with Goofy fighting a losing bout of shadow-boxing. *The Art of Self Defense* was part of a series of eight-minute, comical how-to shorts that began with *The Art of Skiing*, released a few weeks earlier. Each featured Goofy playing all the character roles, trying in vain to follow the narrator's advice.

The war years were coming-of-age years for the whole nation, and for Goofy, too. Born in 1932, wearing his soon-to-be-trademark turtleneck, white gloves, and tall hat in the black-and-white *Mickey's Revue*, he went by the name Dippy Dawg, which would turn into Dippy the Goof and then Goofy. He took the spotlight for the first time in the 1939 short *Goofy and Wilbur*, in which the only other character was his pet grasshopper. He continued to come into his own as the how-to series took off through the early 1940s.



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

A regular Joe DiMaggio in this promotional poster, Disney's notorious bumbler quickly shows his true colors once the film starts rolling.

How to Play Baseball was probably the biggest hit of the series. Disney writers, artists, and other creative types scrambled to put this installment out in 12 weeks so it could show in theaters in July 1942 with the new Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer movie *The Pride of the Yankees*, a tribute to the Hall of Fame first baseman Lou Gehrig, who had died in June 1941. The narrator—strictly business, as usual—tells about the bleachers, the diamond, the uniform, the glove, the bat. On the pitcher's mound, Goofy, dressed in an absurdly baggy uniform, puts the narrator's instructions into action, tossing a spitball and slowball. Goofy happens to play all the positions on the field, on both teams.

The game arrives at its final out in a tie, with a close play at home plate to decide the winner. The umpire screams "Out!" An argument between the catcher, the base runner, and the umpire ensues, with the umpire alternately yelling "Safe!" and "Out!" as each player momentarily gains his favor. No final decision is made as the film ends. The umpire's mask comes off: Goofy.

Reviewers and regular movie-goers alike seemed to love the Goofy routines. Even Bosley Crowther, the infamously stuffy *New York Times* film critic, seemed more than mildly amused: "Preceding the feature on the program—and made at Mr. Goldwyn's request—is a deliciously confused Disney cartoon, a goofy burlesque called *How to Play Baseball*." Goofy was a bona fide hit.

Two years of war had passed before a Goofy how-to finally dealt directly with the conflict. The short was January 1944's *How to Be a Sailor*. It starts with a view of the globe from outer space as the narrator says, "In the beginning, the world was all wet. Today, it is still four-fifths wet." It takes six minutes to fast-forward through the millennia of maritime history leading up to World War II. Then, in the bowels of an American submarine, a call to battle stations comes over the loudspeaker. Goofy, dressed in an old-time sea captain's getup, fumbles with a torpedo as he tries to load it. Instead of the round getting loaded, Goofy himself ends up in the tube and gets shot out. He blasts straight through a long line of Japanese subs and hits Japan on the horizon. The island blows up. It seems a fitting ending for an American cartoon that came out during World War II. If US military brass had been paying attention, *How to Be a Sailor* might have proved to be the most helpful of all the Goofy how-tos. ★

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LANDINGS

New York's Aviation Island

by Mark D. Van Ells

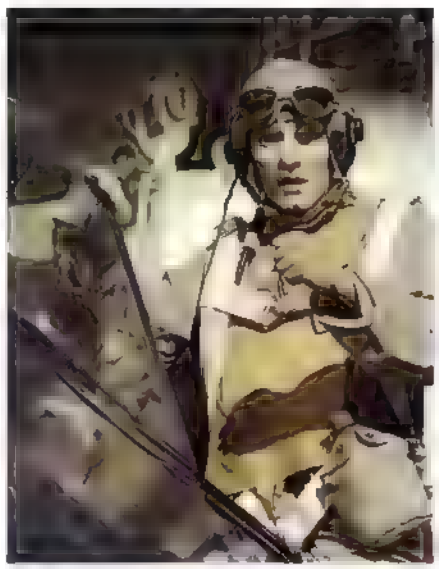
The "Cradle of Aviation" is what some aeronautics enthusiasts call New York's Long Island. The airstrips and factories on the most populated island in the United States, scenes of many significant advances in the history of human flight, were probably never more important than during World War II. Today the Cradle of Aviation Museum in Garden City preserves all the island's aviation history, including its critical contributions to WWII victory.

In the early 20th century, aviators flocked to the open spaces of the Hempstead Plains, a great prairie that stretched across central Long Island. In 1911, the Hempstead Plains Aerodrome was built in this area, east of Garden City, to accommodate experimental flying machines. It was renamed Roosevelt Field in 1919 in honor of Quentin Roosevelt, an army aviator and son of Teddy Roosevelt who was shot down over France during World War I.

As that war raged, the army opened Field No. 2 just to the south of Roosevelt. It became Mitchel Field, named for John P. Mitchel, an army pilot and former New York City mayor who died in a training accident. After the war, Roosevelt was converted to civilian use, but Mitchel stayed in army hands

Long Island remained an important aviation center between the world wars. Charles Lindbergh began his 1927 transatlantic flight from Roosevelt Field. Two years later, at Mitchel, Jimmy Doolittle made the world's first blind flight (a flight in which the pilot depends solely on instruments for takeoff and landing).

During World War II, Mitchel Field became the headquarters of the First Air Force, a unit focused on coastal defense. Antisubmarine patrols took off from the base to guard the approaches to New York Harbor. Mitchel was also a staging area for planes preparing to make transatlantic voyages. After the war, pressure to close the base grew as suburbs overtook Long Island's empty spaces. Mitchel ceased operations in 1961



A "pilot" enters the cockpit of an F6F-5 Hellcat at Long Island's Cradle of Aviation Museum. The Hellcat was one of the best carrier-based fighters of World War II.

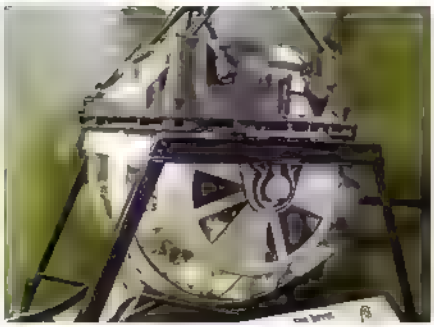
Today Mitchel Field is the site of the Cradle of Aviation Museum. Exhibits here begin with the island's first fliers—kites and balloons—and move on to such interesting planes as the Curtiss JN 4. Known as the Jenny, the JN 4 was the army's most-used training plane of World War I. After the armistice, daredevil pilots snapped up these government surplus planes to use for barnstorming. One of those enterprising entertainers was Charles Lindbergh, who bought the Jenny that's on display here back in 1923. It was the first plane he ever owned.

Exhibits related to the years between the big wars focus on commercial and sport aviation. During the 1920s and 1930s, Long Island was home to as many as 20 aircraft manufacturers, among them Republic in Farmingdale and Grumman in Bethpage.

One Grumman plane on display here is the G-21 Goose, a seaplane developed in 1937 for wealthy Long Islanders who wanted to fly to and from their waterfront estates. Many of these machines also became passenger planes. The specimen here was restored as a commercial liner for Pan American World Airways. For World War II, the US Navy purchased more than 200 of these so-called flying yachts for transportation and rescue use. Another prewar Grumman on display is an F3F, America's last biplane fighter. At the time of the Pearl Harbor attack, the navy and marines still had 200 of these planes in their inventories and used them for training new pilots.

Grumman produced some of the navy's most important and effective war planes. A plane that Grumman coincidentally unveiled on the day of the Pearl Harbor attack became known as the Avenger. This carrier-based torpedo bomber carried a crew of three and featured an innovative motorized turret behind the cockpit armed with a .50-caliber machine gun. The plane on exhibit here is a TBM 3E variant, which General Motors built under contract for Grumman.

Nearby are two of Grumman's fighter "cats." Suspended from the ceiling is an F4F-3 Wildcat, the successor of the F3F and the workhorse for navy and marine pilots early in the war. In addition to seeing extensive service in the Pacific, the Wildcat also flew off escort carriers in the Atlantic. In 1943, the navy began replacing the Wildcat with the more maneuverable and more heavily armed F6F-5 Hellcat, considered to be one of the best carrier-based planes of the war. The Hellcat here is displayed with one wing folded, demonstrating how the



ALL PHOTOS THIS STORY: MARK D VAN ELLS

Upper left: The powerful Grumman F3F biplane was a pilot trainer during World War II. Lower left: The Sperry ball turret was installed in B-17 and B-24 bombers. It held two machine guns and ammo but didn't have enough room for the gunner to bring a standard parachute. Right: The Republic P-47N Thunderbolt was armed with eight machine guns and could carry a 2,500-pound bomb load.

wings would be positioned when the plane was not in use so it would take up less of the limited space aboard a carrier.

All the wartime production at Grumman required a lot of employees putting in long hours. The museum pays tribute to the hard-working civilians who built the planes, with a life-size diorama of a workshop in the Bethpage plant.

Grumman isn't the only warplane manufacturer represented in the museum. Just a few feet away from the cats is another famous Long Island product: a Republic P-47N Thunderbolt, a heavy, high-altitude fighter that saw action in both Europe and the Pacific. There is also an F2A Buffalo, a product of the Brewster Aeronautical Corporation of Long Island City. Navy pilots flew the Buffalo early in the war, but it was phased out for the Wildcat, although several other nations continued to use it. The General Aircraft Corporation of Astoria, Queens, is represented here by a plane without an engine: the CG-4 Waco glider. General Aircraft, in conjunction with the home-building company Dade Brothers of Mineola, made about 1,000 of these gliders during the war to carry troops and cargo.

Surrounding these planes are small exhibits that outline their histories and operational roles. One case holds an ordinary looking piece of dull, dented metal. As the accompanying text explains, the Wildcat hanging from the ceiling was used to train carrier pilots over Lake Michigan. In 1943 one trainee muffed his landing. He survived, but the plane sank. Fifty years later the fighter was raised from the lake and restored. This fragment of the fuselage was saved to give visitors a hint of the plane's unrestored condition.

Video terminals give even more information about the planes, and near the Hellcat there are two small flight simulators where visitors can try to land on the deck of a carrier. All my own attempts ended in crashes, but others might have better luck.

Long Island supplied more than just planes to the WWII effort. Some companies here made related equipment that was vital to US air operations. In Brooklyn, the Carl L. Norden Company manufactured the famous Norden bombsight, the most accurate and technologically advanced of the war. The Sperry Corporation, also based in Brooklyn, produced the ball turret used on the B-17 and B-24 bombers. Examples of both are on display.

The remainder of the museum highlights Long Island's continuing role in military and commercial aviation as well as in the aerospace industry. Anyone interested in aviation will find something fascinating to see at the Cradle of Aviation Museum. But for many, the stars of the show will be the warbirds of World War II. ★

IN A NUTSHELL

WHAT The Cradle of Aviation Museum

WHERE Garden City, Long Island, New York

WHY A beautifully restored, shiny Grumman Wildcat fighter from World War II • A Grumman Hellcat, a carrier-based WWII fighter with wings that folded up to save space while in storage aboard a ship • A life-size diorama of factory workers on the job at the Grumman plant in Bethpage

For more information call the museum at 516-572-4111 or visit its website at www.cradleofaviation.org

MARK D. VAN ELLS *teaches at the City University of New York and is currently writing a traveler's guide to WWI historic sites*

70th Anniversary

D-DAY

June 6, 1944–June 6, 2014

The Fight on the BEACHES

The time for planning and preparation had passed. Dwight Eisenhower had little left to do but chain-smoke and gulp coffee—and watch to see whether his men could drive the Germans from the Normandy shores and begin the end of the war.

by Brian John Murphy

A Douglas C-47 Skytrain lifted off a runway near Portsmouth, England, the last of hundreds, each carrying a 15- to 20-man "stick" of paratroopers toward France's Normandy shore. Watching the plane disappear into the dark sky, General Dwight D. Eisenhower called it a night. It was midnight, and June 6, 1944—D-Day—had begun. The Allied invasion fleet, carrying troops and tanks to five Normandy landing beaches, was already halfway across the English Channel. Eisenhower went to a little trailer on the grounds of Southwick House and tried to relax with cowboy novels and the last of his usual four packs a day of Camels and 12 to 15 cups of coffee.

PHOTO BY ROBERT CAPA, © 2001 BY CORNELL CAPA/MAGNUM PHOTOS

Coming in low to avoid German bullets, a 16th Infantry Regiment GI washes onto Normandy's Omaha Beach in the second assault wave on D-Day, June 6, 1944. Behind him are steel "Czech hedgehog" anti-tank obstacles, which some GIs tried, unsuccessfully, to use for cover.

The Fight on the BEACHES by Brian John Murphy

There were no more orders to give, no more men to assemble, and no more supplies to stockpile. There was no more negotiating, pleading, charming, and politicking to get a hundred and one governmental and military bodies to pull together. Now the Liberation of Europe was up to the fighting men.

The First Men In

ACROSS THE CHANNEL, the long train of C-47s circled Normandy's Cotentin Peninsula to approach the jump zones and glider landing zones from the west. They were delivering the first of more than 20,000 parachute and glider infantrymen of the 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions, tasked with a twofold mission: cut off reinforcements and supplies to the Germans defending what would soon be the westernmost American landing beach, codenamed Utah, and help landing troops get off the beaches.

As soon as the air fleet neared the peninsula's western shore, a cloud bank obscured the stars. The Skytrains were on their own, each pilot navigating by the seat of his pants. Some too hastily lit the green light that signaled paratroopers to jump. Whole sticks of men jumped into the dark and drowned in the sea.

Moderate to heavy ground fire met the planes. Private Leonard Griffing, a 101st Airborne paratrooper in the 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment, remembered,

When I got into the doorway, I looked out into what looked like a solid wall of tracer bullets. I said to myself, "Len, you're in as much trouble now as you're ever going to be in. If you get out of this, nobody can ever do anything to you that you ever have to worry about!"

Some troopers, watching bullets and flak rising toward their planes, sat on their helmets. Some pilots flew too fast, trying to evade anti aircraft fire. When their men jumped, equipment, leg bags, and helmets were torn away in the slipstream.

PARATROOPERS FLOATED DOWN to earth, blind in the black night. Some got hung up in trees, many around the target village of Sainte-Mère-Église. The Germans shot these helpless men. At dawn, their buddies would find them dangling lifeless. Other paratroopers landed amid German units and were killed or captured.

German Field Marshall Erwin Rommel, charged with repelling the Allied invasion, had ordered many low fields flooded as obstacles to gliders and death traps for parachutists. The tactic worked: many paratroopers touched down in the flooded fields, struggled with their equipment, sank, and drowned.

Incredibly, many paratroopers landed safely, near men from their own or other American outfits. Sergeant David Rogers of the 101st Airborne recalled,

I drifted to the edge of [a] village and landed with my parachute caught in a small tree in a fence row. I got out of my parachute and was looking around the area when I saw a shadowy figure about 150 feet [away] along the fence row moving toward me. I clicked my cricket [a small, metal signaling clicker] and received two clicks in return.... I met...Sergeant Isaac Cole. We were extremely happy to see each other.... Gunfire sounds were coming from every direction. It wasn't long before Sergeant Cole and myself had gathered together 6 or 7 other paratroopers, none of whom I knew. We didn't bother to ask their names or what unit they belonged to. We were just glad to have this small group together in one piece.

Paratroopers mingled on the platoon, company, regimental, and divisional levels. Whatever confusion that caused, the mixed groups managed to figure out the direction and distance to their nearest objectives and advance aggressively. Soon the sounds of desperate firefights filled the night.

By dawn, men from the 101st had cleared beach exits for US infantry that would soon land on Utah Beach. The 505th Parachute Infantry's 3rd Battalion—82nd Airborne men—occupied Sainte-Mère-Église, about seven miles inland from Utah, cutting German connections to the harbor city of Cherbourg atop the Cotentin Peninsula, about 24 miles northwest. Confusion reigned among Normandy's German defenders. Some airdrops released Rupert dummies, one-third-scale dummy paratroopers carrying pyrotechnics to simulate small arms fire. This ruse drew some Germans away from the real drop zones.

Crashing into France

AMERICAN WACO CG-4A GLIDERS were unsophisticated craft. Engineless and built of plywood, they were defenseless against enemy fire and ground obstacles, and field landings were always rough. On D-Day, they were even rougher than expected.

Glider infantryman Terry Sanford of the 82nd Airborne reported that the tug planes that pulled the gliders were supposed to ascend to 700 feet upon crossing the Normandy coast. But most stayed at 200 feet, which gave the glider pilots no opportunity to find a landing field or avoid obstacles. Many landings became crashes, killing and maiming aircrew and troops.

Private First Class Alfred Nigl and his buddies endured a rough touchdown:

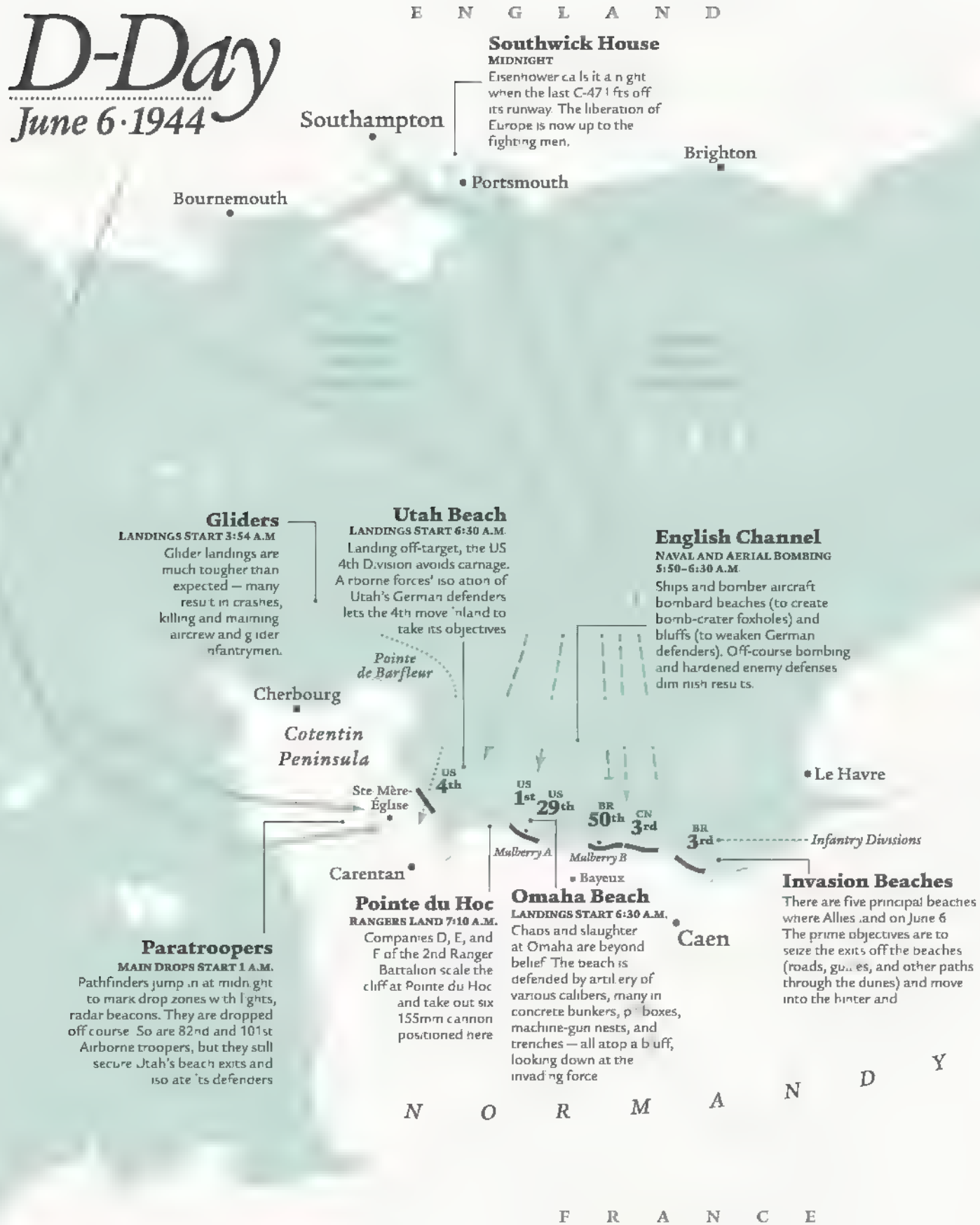
We were still in the air when we hit something [while] going 100 miles an hour (later we learned we had hit a tree). There was this horrible loud noise; the sound made you sick to your stom-

ALL PHOTOS THIS SPREAD & REMAINDER OF STORY: NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Above: Men of the 101st Airborne's 502nd Parachute Infantry (indicated by a heart on their helmets) chat with General Dwight Eisenhower before boarding C-47s for a midnight jump into Normandy. It's about 8:30 P.M., June 5, 1944, at Greenham Common Airfield, Berkshire, England.
Opposite: In the English Channel, GIs climb from an LCI (Landing Craft, Infantry) into a Higgins boat for the ride to a Normandy beach.

D-Day

June 6·1944


ENGLAND
Southwick House
MIDNIGHT
Eisenhower calls it a night when the last C-47 lifts off its runway. The liberation of Europe is now up to the fighting men.
Southampton
Portsmouth
Brighton
Bournemouth
Gliders
LANDINGS START 3:54 A.M.
Glider landings are much tougher than expected — many result in crashes, killing and maiming aircrew and glider infantrymen.
Utah Beach
LANDINGS START 6:30 A.M.
Landing off-target, the US 4th Division avoids carnage. Airborne forces' isolation of Utah's German defenders lets the 4th move inland to take its objectives
Pointe de Barfleur
Cherbourg
Cotentin Peninsula
English Channel
NAVAL AND AERIAL BOMBING 5:50–6:30 A.M.
Ships and bomber aircraft bombard beaches (to create bomb-crater foxholes) and bluffs (to weaken German defenders). Off-course bombing and hardened enemy defenses diminish results.
Le Havre
US 4th
Ste-Mère-Église
US 1st
US 29th
BR 50th
CN 3rd
BR 3rd
Infantry Divisions
Mulberry A
Mulberry B
Carentan
Bayeux
Caen
Pointe du Hoc
RANGERS LAND 7:10 A.M.
Companies D, E, and F of the 2nd Ranger Battalion scale the cliff at Pointe du Hoc and take out six 155mm cannon positioned here
Omaha Beach
LANDINGS START 6:30 A.M.
Chaos and slaughter at Omaha are beyond belief. The beach is defended by artillery of various calibers, many in concrete bunkers, pillboxes, machine-gun nests, and trenches — all atop a bluff, looking down at the invading force
Paratroopers
MAIN DROPS START 1 A.M.
Pathfinders jump in at midnight to mark drop zones with lights, radar beacons. They are dropped off course. So are 82nd and 101st Airborne troopers, but they still secure Utah's beach exits and isolate its defenders
Invasion Beaches
There are five principal beaches where Allies land on June 6. The prime objectives are to seize the exits off the beaches (roads, gullies, and other paths through the dunes) and move into the hinterland
NORMANDY
FRANCE

The Fight on the **BEACHES** by Brian John Murphy

ach. Then everything went black. When I came to I was lying upside down on my head.... Several men had been killed in the crash. The pilot was...pinned to a tree with the landing gear through his chest. It was pitch black, so we set up a machine gun to guard the ammunition. The Germans were all around us....

The Invasion Beaches

THE ALLIES WOULD LAND on five principal beaches on June 6. West to east, they were Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno, and Sword. The first two were for the US First Army. Utah, on the Cotentin Peninsula, would receive Major General Raymond O. Barton's 4th Infantry Division of the VII Corps. Elements of the V Corps' 29th and 1st Infantry Divisions, of major generals Charles H. Gerhardt and Clarence R. Huebner, respectively, would hit Omaha. The landing forces' objectives were to seize exits off the beaches (roads, gullies, and other paths through the dunes) and move quickly into the hinterland.

Utah's biggest exit was heavily defended by pillboxes, machine-gun nests, and trenches. The situation on Omaha was worse. It was defended by artillery of various calibers, many of them in concrete bunkers, pillboxes, machine gun nests, and trenches, and all of them atop a bluff overlooking the invading force. It was a long, deadly run from the water's edge to the shelter of a seawall. The invading infantry had been promised that heavy bombers would strike the beach, destroying German defenses and leaving craters to serve as pre-dug foxholes.

A Job for the Rangers

BETWEEN THE AMERICAN BEACHES, high atop a cliff called Pointe du Hoc, sat concrete artillery emplacements housing six German 155mm cannon, each with a 25,000-yard range. The emplacements offered a spectacular view of Omaha and Utah, and the 155s could sweep Omaha from end to end. Some 200 troops of the German 716th Infantry Division defended the position, with trenches and machine-gun nests along the strongpoint's landward perimeter. The unenviable job of scaling the cliff and destroying the big guns went to Lieutenant Colonel James Earl Rudder's 2nd Ranger Battalion.

At sea three miles from their objective, the 2nd Rangers' D, E,

OPPOSITE: DREAMLINE CARTOGRAPHY/DAVID DEIS

Above: Some GIs arrived at their landing beaches aboard LCIs, but most came in LCVPs (Landing Craft, Vehicle, Personnel)—Higgins boats. This photo by coast guard Chief Photographer's Mate Robert F. Sargent shows a Higgins boat from USS *Samuel Chase* as its human cargo—part of the 16th Infantry's Company E—lands on Omaha Beach around 7:40 A.M. on D-Day. The men had traveled 10 miles in the boat, through rough seas.

and F Companies boarded 10 LCAs (Landing Craft, Assault) at 6 A.M. Two more craft carried supplies and four DUKWs (amphibious trucks, pronounced "ducks") carried ladders requisitioned from London fire brigades. Rough seas tossed the little flotilla. An LCA carrying supplies shipped water and sank. An LCT (Landing Craft, Tank) also carrying supplies sank, taking all but one man to the bottom. About a mile from shore, mortar fire destroyed another LCT. German 20mm cannon fire sank a DUKW.

Checking his maps and landmarks, Rudder found his force had drifted three miles to the east. He ordered his flotilla to come about and head west, but 40 minutes had been wasted. Reinforcements that would have gone directly to Rudder—the 5th Ranger Battalion and the 2nd Rangers' A and B Companies—had been awaiting a signal from the point. When none came, they landed on Omaha's westernmost landing zones. They would fight their way west to Pointe du Hoc. For now, Rudder and his roughly 225 men would face the cliffs and guns on their own.

Plans in Ruins on Omaha

ACCORDING TO THE PLAN, after heavy bombers pounded the German-held bluffs and cratered Utah and Omaha beaches to make the promised instant foxholes, a 40-minute naval bombardment would finish softening up the defenses. The invading troops would still face enemy fire, but would be better able to take the beach and reach their inland objectives

But things didn't go according to plan. Trying to bomb through haze and low clouds, the heavies missed the beaches and fortifications, dropping their payloads inland instead. So instead of instant foxholes on the beaches, there was a long, exposed run to the seawall, where the troops were to assemble to assault the towering bluffs from which the Germans rained down fire

The 29th Division's 116th Regimental Combat Team was assigned to hit a western sector of Omaha. Army records show the troops were lavishly equipped for their landing and breakout:

The 116th assault craft were loaded so that the first to land would be a section leader and five riflemen armed with M1s and carrying 96 rounds of ammunition. Following was a wire-cutting team of four men, armed with rifles.... Behind these...were: two BAR [Browning Automatic Rifle] teams of two men each, carrying 900 rounds per gun; two bazooka teams, totaling four men, the assistants armed with carbines; a mortar team of four men, with a 60-mm mortar and 15 to 20 rounds; a flame-thrower crew of two men; and finally five demolition men.... A medic and the assistant section leader sat at the stern.

Everybody wore assault jackets, with large pockets and built-in packs on the back; each man carried, in addition to personal weapons and special equipment, a gas mask, five grenades..., a half-pound block of TNT with primacord fuse, and 6 one-third rations.... The men wore life preservers [two per man in some units].... Equipment and weapons of the 116th were fastened to life preservers so that they could be floated in.

This equipment would be of doubtful value on Omaha, where chaos and slaughter were immediate. The 116th's A and B Companies got the worst of it. Company A came in on seven Higgins boats (LCVPs, or Landing Craft, Vehicle, Personnel). German 20mm guns, mixed artillery, mortars, and machine guns opened up. Several boats were hit or sunk, killing or drowning men whose equipment dragged them to the bottom. Other boats foundered in the rough water. Men who were forced to swim ashore inflated their lifebelts, but many wore them around their waists rather than under their arms. Top-heavy with equipment, they flipped facedown and drowned.

THE FIRST WAVE'S LANDING CRAFT dropped their ramps on Omaha at 6:36 A.M. Too many were too far from shore, and the men on them had to stride into deep water and struggled to avoid drowning. Dozens of German machine guns opened fire, and American units dissolved

Just reaching the beach became an epic struggle. Some men

Above, left: A lieutenant (right) and his men, laden with equipment, wade onto Omaha Beach from an LST (Landing Ship, Tank). Above, right: A dead GI lies beside a burning truck hit by enemy fire on a D-Day beach. Opposite, left: USS *Nevada (BB-36)* blasts German defenses on Utah Beach with her 14-inch guns. Naval artillery provided help for Americans struggling to get off the beaches. Opposite, right: Three companies of the 2nd Ranger Battalion landed at the base of Pointe du Hoc, a cliff between Utah and Omaha whose German heavy artillery threatened both beaches. The Rangers scaled the cliff using ropes, toggle ropes, and portable ladders, all seen here, and took out the guns.

floated to appear dead. Many hunkered down to use the water as cover, advancing to the beach with the rising tide. The same tide drowned wounded men who were unable to get out of the water.

First Lieutenant Robert Edlin of the 2nd Rangers' Company A landed alongside the 116th. His boat grounded on a sandbar about 75 yards offshore. The men debarked over the boat's sides. Edlin recalled,

It was cold, miserably cold, even though it was June. The water temperature was probably forty-five or fifty degrees. It was up to my shoulders when I went in, and I saw men sinking all about me.... There were bodies from the 116th floating everywhere. They were face-down in the water with packs still on their backs. They had inflated their life jackets. Fortunately, most of the Rangers did not inflate theirs or they also might have turned over and drowned.

On the eastern half of Omaha, the 1st Division's 16th Regimental Combat Team suffered a similar ordeal. Staff Sergeant

Harley Reynolds described the approach to shore:

I was looking over the side often during these last minutes. We were moving slow because of other craft and obstacles [that] the coxswain had to avoid. I saw direct hits on craft still far away from land. I doubt those on board...made it to shore.

I saw craft sideways, being upturned, and dumping troops into the water. I saw craft heavily damaged by shellfire being tossed around by the waves. I saw craft empty of troops and partly filled with water as though abandoned, awash in the surf. Men were among them struggling for the pitiful protection they gave.

Troops who sought cover behind the steel beam obstacles the Germans had erected at the water's edge were annihilated. Officers, sergeants, and corporals trying to organize resistance were cut down. One officer of the 116th, Lieutenant Edward Tidrick, was shot in the throat. He rose from the water to order Private First Class Leo J. Nash to "advance with the wire cutters." Immediately, machine-gun bullets ripped Tidrick open from head to hip. Nash later saw a boat of medical personnel arriving. When the ramp dropped, all the medics inside were cut to pieces by machine guns.

Private First Class Harold Baumgarten landed with 116th's Company B:

The...boat on our left was hit by a shell and blew up. The splintered wood, metal, and body parts were raining down on us from about fifteen feet above.... Finally, the boat stopped, and the front ramp went down in neck-deep water.... German MG 42s [machine guns] were trained on our ramp opening.... The water was bright red, from the blood of some of those who had been in front of me.

Some of the fellows, who were able to exit the boat without getting machine gunned, were being dragged under by [their] wet combat jackets and heavy equipment. Their life preservers were of no value. The water was over the head of the average man in my boat. German snipers were also picking them off. The water was being splattered up by bullets as I ran through it. It was surreal. About 20 feet to my left front were two of our Dual Drive Amphibious medium army tanks [swimming DD, or duplex drive, Sherman tanks], with their rubber sides down. Where were the other fourteen that were supposed be here?

...Six 29ers [29th Division men] were clinging to the first [tank] to my left and seven were clutching to the one closest to me. The distal tank had a dead soldier hanging from [its] turret. It had been knocked out.... About 200 yards from the wall, we were now run-

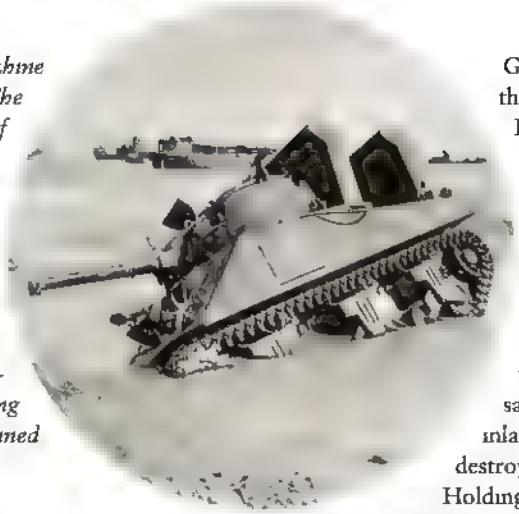
★ WEB EXTRA! ★

As GIs awaited orders to attack across the Channel, US sailors off West Africa were on the hunt for the first U-boat capture of the war. Read about it at AmericaInWWII.com

ning in ankle-deep water…. A burst of machine gun bullets came from above the wall…. The beach around 7:30 A.M. appeared as if painted red. The channel water on the beach was red with blood….

The army's after-action report for the 116th's Company A states,

Within 20 minutes of striking the beach, "A" had ceased to be an assault company and had become a forlorn little rescue party bent on survival and the saving of lives. Orders were no longer being given by anyone; each man who remained sound moved or not as he saw fit.



The Rangers Face the Cliff

BACK AT POINTE DU HOC, Rudder's force was at the cliff's eastern base by 7:10. Naval bombardment had piled up earth there. The shore was so changed that the DUKWs with the ladders couldn't get close enough. Rudder's LCAs did get close, and fired rocket-powered grappling hooks at the cliff. Some of the hooks fell short, weighed down by ropes soaked during the choppy sea ride. Others worked fine, and the ropes paid out over the cliffs. The Rangers began to climb.

Second Lieutenant George Kerchner of Company D recalled,

As we approached the beach I gave the order to fire our rockets…. Out of our six ropes five of them cleared the cliffs, which was a pretty good percentage…. The ramp was lowered…. I hollered, "O.K., Let's go!" and ran off the ramp, first one out, and immediately sank in eight feet of water. It was a large bomb crater….

Germans at the top tried to toss grenades at the Rangers, but fire from the destroyers HMS *Talybont* and USS *Satterlee (DD-626)* kept the defenders away from the cliff's edge. Soon, despite the loss of 15 men, Rudder's Rangers had a foothold at the top. As more men came up, the force split, going after various targets. The big guns had been evacuated from the mammoth bunkers and replaced with telephone poles to trick air reconnaissance. The real guns were a few dozen yards inland, being prepared to fire. The Rangers destroyed them using thermite grenades.

Holding Pointe du Hoc was harder than taking it. German forces counterattacked all day and night, seven times in all. Some 24 hours after assaulting the cliffs, only 100 or so of Rudder's men remained to defend a 200 yard perimeter. By the time they were relieved, Rudder's Rangers had suffered 70 percent casualties, but they had held the seized ground.

Salvaging Omaha Beach

BRIGADIER GENERAL NORMAN D. "Dutch" Cota, the 29th Division's assistant commander, arrived on the western half of Omaha Beach around 7:30 A.M. with Company K of the 116th. Cota's boat hung up on an obstacle, and German machine guns killed key officers when the ramp went down. He and the remnant of his party sheltered behind a knocked-out tank, then sprinted for the seawall.

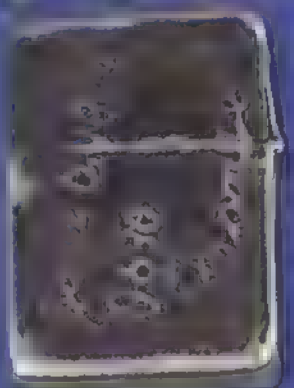
Cota arrived amid catastrophe. Scores of dead floated in the water and lay on the beach. Of the 743rd Tank Battalion's 55

Lighting Up a Mystery

Soldiers carried many things onto the shore during the D-Day landings of June 6, 1944. One of those was the Zippo cigarette lighter.

When the United States entered World War II, Zippo, of Bradford, Pennsylvania, ceased production of lighters for consumers and started manufacturing exclusively for the troops. Because brass, chrome, and nickel were reserved for use in military equipment, Zippo's lighters had to be made of different metals, forcing founder George G. Blaisdell to imagine ways to keep those metals from rusting. Zippo fabricated the cases from scrap steel, then covered them with thick black paint and baked it to a crackle finish. WWII Zippos were famous for that distinctive rough exterior.

GIs used their lighters to heat rations in helmets, light campfires, spark fuses for explosives, hammer nails, signal comrades in the dark, and, of course, light cigarettes. Many soldiers engraved their lighters with their name, rank, and battalion or location so that these vital pieces of equipment were unmistakably identified as their own.



The Zippo on which GI Walter Nadler scratched the date and time as he approached Utah Beach on D-Day.

After D-Day, one particular engraved Zippo was found on Normandy's Utah beach. Unearthed in Zippo artifacts and archival materials in Pennsylvania 50 years after the war, the lighter sparked many questions. The front reads "Walter Nadler" in carefully etched script. The back reads "June 6, 1944, 0630, France."

A worldwide search for the mysterious soldier led to family members in New Jersey, who reported that he had passed away in 1990. Nadler landed on Utah Beach with the 4th Division on D-Day. His son Bud remembered his father's tale about scratching his name, the date, and time of his landing on his Zippo as he sat in his landing craft. The lighter went missing on the Utah sands.

Walter Nadler never saw his Zippo again. As he told his son, finding the lighter was the least of his worries that day.

—Kristen Carmen
editorial intern

The Fight on the BEACHES by Brian John Murphy

Shermans (launched more than three miles offshore), 51 were sunk or destroyed. The remainder spent their ammunition, then chugged up and down the beaches, giving cover to men dashing from waterline to seawall. Destroyed materiel thickly littered the sands and the water's edge. German forward units were reporting to their headquarters that the invasion had been halted at the water's edge. All along Omaha, dispirited Americans, many of them wounded, took shelter against seawalls and berms, safe from enemy fire but weaponless and in the apathy of shock.

Cota wasn't the only officer responsible for what happened next, but he is emblematic of what countless other officers, sergeants, corporals, and even privates did all along bloody Omaha. They decided they weren't going to take it anymore. Men assumed leadership and led parties of brave and angry soldiers over the seawall.

Wherever Cota went, he told his men to snap out of it, grab an M1 from one of the dead and get off the beach. Private First Class Baumgarten saw him in action:

About 11 A.M.... Cota, with a pistol in his hand, came running up our beach from the west.... I couldn't talk, due to my face wound, but some of the guys called to him to get down. It was reassuring to us to see this brave man on the beach, disregarding the snipers. [Cota said] that the only ones who were going to remain on the beach, "Are the dead and those that are going to die." [His] call was, "Twenty-nine! Let's go!" And we went.

Baumgarten was one of several wounded men who went over the top together:

I joined a group of eleven other soldiers to ascend the bluff to fight. I called our group "the walking wounded," as all of them had already been wounded. One of the fellows, with a tourniquet around his left arm, had his Twenty-ninth Division [shoulder] patch half blown off. There was blood dripping from his left hand and fingers so he handled his M-1 with his right hand.

BIT BY BIT, soldiers of the 116th and 16th began advancing in small parties. Private Warren Ruhen of the 16th remembered,

I reached the beach, where soldiers were bunched up behind a sandbank. Lying beside me, on his back, was a soldier who had been shot in the stomach. He held his hand over his stomach,

Opposite, top: An M-4 Sherman tank named *Cannon Ball 2* sits stuck in a pit on Utah. The protruding trunks behind the turret are deep wading gear. They extended the air intake and exhaust outlet above the water level, allowing the tank to wade. Above: Men of the 4th Infantry Division's 8th Infantry Regiment rest safe from enemy bullets behind a seawall on Utah Beach before going up and over to capture inland objectives.

moaning..., then he died. I picked up his rifle.... I put a clip of ammunition in.... I began firing.

Finally, out of the water...walking straight up with a staff of officers following him, I recognized Colonel (George) Taylor, regimental commander.... When he got in I heard him say to the officers, "If we're going to die, let's die up there." It seemed to take effect because the officers began moving their men from that...beach to reach their objective.

The Germans were surprised. German Franz Gockel, who defended an Omaha gun position, recounted,

The first enemy soldiers penetrated our position, surprising us while we were concentrating on the landing craft.... I and two others covered the westward side, and while changing locations one of my comrades received a fatal head shot. And a few minutes later I was shot through the left hand. The Americans had entered our trenches and were only 20 meters away!

Gockel retreated to Colleville-sur-Mer, where his company was fighting other Americans attacking from Omaha.

Medics work on a wounded fellow medic on Utah Beach. Utah's casualties were relatively light, just 200 compared to at least 3,000 on Omaha. The paratroopers and glider infantrymen who landed behind Utah in the wee hours had paid a high toll, though—about 2,500 casualties.

BY MIDDAY, hundreds of soldiers had recovered from the shock of the landings and were off the beach, pushing inland. One group entered Vierville to encounter French civilians drinking milk in a little shop. The civilians reported that 400 Germans occupying the village had scattered when the naval bombardment began.

By 12:30 P.M., sporadic enemy artillery fire was still hitting Omaha Beach, but 18,772 Americans had landed there. The 29th Division's 115th Infantry Regiment landed and attacked Saint-Laurent, inland from Omaha's center. At 2:15 the first prisoners from the German 352nd Infantry Division were escorted to the beach by soldiers of the 115th.

At 5:21 P.M. the beach was reported safe for wheeled and tracked vehicles. Omaha was, more or less, in American hands. Units had landed way out of place, leaving gaps, but the beach was essentially captured. The Germans would not be taking it back.

Private First Class Earl Chellis remembered,

Someone said move to the right. We got up and ran to where there was a line of men going up a hill and off the beach.

I got in the line up the hill and was told to step in the foot prints of the man in front of me because there were land mines all around us.... When I got to the top of the hill I looked down at the beach, shells were exploding and ships were burning. Men and equipment were still coming in.... As I was waiting for the next move I was knocked over and hit the ground. I landed on my back, I heard someone say, "Call a medic." ...I had been hit by a piece of shrapnel on my left shoulder.... The medic patched me up and told me to go back down to the beach and I would get back to England. I looked at him and said I just got off that beach and I was not going to go back down there. I got up and moved forward. I spent the night behind a hedgerow.

A Different Story at Utah

THINGS HAD GONE VERY DIFFERENTLY at Utah. At 6:30 A.M., the channel was choppy as the landing craft began their charge. Lieutenant Colonel Rex A. Smith of the 449th Military Police Company, attached to the 1st Engineer Special Brigade, recalled the run to Utah Beach:

The decks of countless landing craft were fouled with vomit floating in seawater. It would be hard to imagine how much more miserable these keyed-up, wet, cold, and wretchedly seasick men could be—if not for the imminent landing on the beach.... After the boats assembled for our wave we took off for the beach...two miles away. Half way there our boat began to leak and we were soon standing in two feet of water.

Among the soldiers in the first wave, traveling with the 8th Infantry Regiment, was Brigadier General Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., son and namesake of the late president. Although he had a heart condition, he had pleaded to land with the first wave, and his wish had been granted.

Joe Blaylock, a 4th Division artillerist, recounted,

About ten minutes later, after we got ourselves protected, General Roosevelt got us all together—battery commanders, battalion commanders—and told us we weren't where we were supposed to be. He gave us the coordinates of where we were. Everybody checked it on their map, and he said, "We'll start the war from here!"

Roosevelt spent the rest of the day under fire, directing troops like a traffic cop, raising morale by his conspicuous courage.

Soon, the paratroopers coming from inland and the landing troops moving in from the beach met. Major Leland Baker of the 101st Airborne's 502nd Parachute Infantry, recalled the linkup:

I was on a rise, watching in the direction of the beach. I saw a platoon of men coming down the road.

They got closer. I could see the four-leaf clover on their left shoulder, which was the insigna of the 4th Infantry Division [the insignia is actually a cross of ivy, for IV, four in Roman numerals]. Their lieutenant called out to me, "How're you doing there, paratrooper?" I said, "Fine sir how are you doing?" He said, "Well I don't know yet. This thing just got started for us." I said, "Well, likewise here."

Breakthrough at Hitler's Atlantic Wall

THE OMAHA BEACHHEAD WAS SHALLOW, but every hour the number of Americans there swelled. Utah was an unqualified success,

By June 8, Omaha Beach was a completely different scene. No longer a place of relentless carnage and hopelessness, it had instead become a busy beachhead funneling troops, supplies, tanks, and equipment inland. Eisenhower's great invasion had worked. Now the battle for Normandy began.

thanks to a lucky mistake that put the troops on the wrong beach (thus missing heavy fortifications at the *correct* beach). The Germans would counterattack, but their tank divisions from northern France wouldn't roll until Adolf Hitler (who had stayed in bed until after noon) gave the command. By then the American, British, and Canadian forces in Normandy were overwhelmingly large.

Gaining this foothold had cost many lives. For decades, historians estimated that at least 10,000 of the approximately 156,000 Allied men involved in D-Day had become casualties, 2,500 of them killed. Approximately 6,603 of the casualties were Americans, and 1,465 of them were killed. German casualties weren't documented, but historians have estimated them at 4,000 to 9,000.

Those are the traditionally reported numbers. But since 2000, researchers at the National D-Day Memorial Foundation in Bedford, Virginia, have been working to document every Allied serviceman who died on D-Day by name. Already the number of documented Allied dead has risen to 4,413—2,499 of them Americans.

A BLOODY CAMPAIGN IN NORMANDY'S HEDGEROWS would follow D-Day, ending with the encirclement and destruction of German Army Group B in the Falaise region. The German survivors would cross the Seine and make for their homeland while the French and Americans liberated Paris on August 25. With that, Operation Overlord, the Western Allies' invasion of Hitler's Fortress Europe, would be complete. ★

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70th Anniversary

D-DAY

June 6, 1944–June 6, 2014

The First Battle of WORLD WAR III

D-Day wasn't about defeating the Germans. They were already beaten. It was about stopping the Soviets. It was about winning the *next* war.

by Andrew A. Wiest

For years, Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin pressured his partners in World War II's Grand Alliance, the United States and Great Britain, to launch a ground offensive in Europe to help take German *Wehrmacht* pressure off his embattled Red Army. For years, Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill resisted and, for reasons that made tactical sense, instead opted for offensive operations first in North Africa and then in Sicily and Italy.

But by 1944, when British and American forces finally made ready to launch Operation Overlord—the Normandy invasion—the strategic situation had changed dramatically. Stalin still pressed for a second front in Western Europe, but the weight of his immediate need had passed. The Soviet Union had finally hit its military and industrial stride, pushing the German invaders back from the gates of Moscow and Stalingrad. Now dwarfing the once mighty *Wehrmacht*, the Red Army was a fully mechanized fighting machine, boasting waves of tens of thousands of T-34 tanks, the best in the war. With numbers, technology, industrial might, and tactical mastery on its side, the Soviet military colossus was not just big. It was good. Frightfully good.

The Grand Alliance had always been a fragile thing. Roosevelt

Opposite: A war's-end Soviet poster depicts a saintly Premier Josef Stalin eulogized with "Long live the victorious nation! Long live our dear Stalin!" The quiet Allied goal for the Normandy invasion was to keep that nation from being *too* victorious.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

and especially Churchill looked upon the Bolsheviks in Russia with a great amount of skepticism. That skepticism that turned to outright fear in the early years of the war, when the Soviets made common cause with the Third Reich, leaving Britain to stand alone. The onset of Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union, Operation Barbarossa in 1941, had turned the tide of Soviet-Western relations, with Churchill famously quipping that if Adolf Hitler invaded Hell, "I would make at least a favorable reference to the Devil in the House of Commons."

ALTHOUGH THERE WAS common cause and a common enemy, tension had remained in the Grand Alliance, a tension that often focused on what Europe would look like if the Soviets proved victorious. For the British Foreign Office, worry peaked after the Allied victories at Stalingrad and at El Alamein in North Africa, with representatives urging Churchill to launch a series of talks with Britain's alliance partners on the shape of the postwar world. Churchill, who was in bed recovering from pneumonia, railed at the notion of focusing on postwar matters when there was so much fighting yet to be done, advising that Britain drop the matter "like the hottest of hot bricks." But, given the opportunity to recover and reflect, Churchill came to the reluctant conclusion that, at the close of World War II, the Soviet Union would be the only power in Europe able to use force, "and that to a measureless and unlimited extent." As a counterweight to a powerful Soviet Union, the British considered working with a liberated and strengthened France, which was predicated, of course, upon first invading and liberating France.

RIGHT: LIBRARY OF CONGRESS; TOP: NATIONAL ARCHIVES

What had seemed to be considerations of a distant and hazy future became more pressing concerns as the Soviets marched westward during 1943, following a crushing victory over the Germans at Kursk. The chief questions centered on the future of Eastern Europe, especially Poland. Britain had gone to war with Germany over the territorial integrity of Poland, territory that the Soviets had also invaded and were obviously bent on taking. What guarantee did Britain have that the Soviets would be satisfied with taking Poland, or even Germany? While the effort to defeat Germany maintained a vise like grip on Churchill's attention, an ever-greater amount of his thinking had to be spent on the threat that was the Red Army, as many possibilities for the future balance of power in Europe became clearer.

In early 1944, Churchill wrote a letter to Anthony Eden, leader of the House of Commons and one of his closest confidants on foreign policy, indicating that his trust in the Soviets was waning, because "force and facts are their only realities." Churchill was so worried that he feared the Soviets might even "tip the wink" to the Germans about the coming cross Channel invasion, allowing the Germans more time to prepare. The British military, ever practical, even went to the extreme of suggesting to Churchill that a postwar bloc against the Soviet Union should include a defeated Germany. Initially Churchill bristled at the idea. Germany was the enemy. Stalin was the ally. The war had to be won. But Churchill admitted, "If of course the view is adopted that Russia is going to present herself as a new Nazi Germany ideologically inverted, we shall have to make what head we can against another tyranny, and this would have to be borne in mind when considering the position which a chastened Germany would occupy."

By 1944 victory was in the offing in Europe. The *Wehrmacht* would fight hard, and millions of lives remained to be lost, but Germany would be defeated. The only question was *whose* victory would it be? That was less pressing to a distant United States, which was still involved in bitter fighting in the Pacific. The new American ambassador in Moscow, Averell Harriman, was concerned about Soviet designs in Eastern Europe but had yet to be convinced that the Soviets were the main threat to the future of the West. But Churchill and the British were more aware of a grim tactical reality. The war was being won, and the Soviet juggernaut stood poised near the border with Germany, while the nearest Western forces were bogged down in the mountains of Italy. As it stood, victory in Europe was going to be a Soviet victory.

There is no doubt that Operation Overlord was aimed at Germany. The *Wehrmacht* remained strong under capable leaders like Erwin Rommel and Gerd von Rundstedt. Hitler's regime, the perpetrators of almost unimaginable crimes against humanity, needed to be stopped. The British, Canadian, American, Polish, and French soldiers who splashed ashore against German machine-gun fire or who dropped behind enemy lines fought to liberate France from German rule. The Falaise Pocket closed on

Above: Propaganda flowed freely from the governments of all WWII belligerents. Here, an avuncular Joseph Stalin works at his desk for a publicity shot. A 1944 Soviet poster shows Adolf Hitler getting crushed—and, interestingly, appears to give each of the Allied Big Three equal credit in the effort.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Josef Stalin, Franklin Roosevelt, and Winston Churchill all look pleased at the 1943 Teheran Conference. But Churchill was beginning to worry that Stalin might want more out of the war than just a slice of Germany—namely, all of Europe.

German forces in August, ending a campaign that crushed an entire German army. But all the while the Soviets lurked in the background, and the coming Cold War loomed ever greater in the thinking of Britons and Americans alike.

As the war against Germany developed into an increasingly desperate race to Berlin, tensions began to mount. Conclusions that Churchill had reluctantly reached were now becoming crystal clear to the Americans. As the war neared its conclusion, Harriman sent a cable to Roosevelt, one of the last cables the dying president would receive. Harriman informed FDR of his opinion that "we must clearly recognize that the Soviet program is the establishment of totalitarianism, ending personal liberty and democracy as we know and respect it." After Roosevelt's death, Harriman wasted no time and minced no words with Harry Truman, informing the new president that his first priority should be to enact immediate measures to forestall a "barbarian" invasion of the West by the Soviet Union.

Perhaps this is historical heresy, but I firmly believe that the Normandy invasion had little to do with winning the Second World War. The mighty *Wehrmacht* was going to be crushed, and Germany was going to go down in a sea of flame no matter what happened on the distant coast of northern France. The invasion had almost *everything* to do with *who* won the war. Churchill and Roosevelt both knew that the irresistible force that was the Red Army would rampage across Eastern Europe and grew increasingly worried that a Red tide could even swamp the entire continent. The Normandy invasion, followed by British and American operations throughout northwestern Europe, meant that roughly half the continent was spared the bleak forecast of Soviet invasion.

IN MANY WAYS the Cold War began on the beaches of Normandy, a Third World War that proved to be an evenly matched affair. British and American actions in Europe meant that France, West Germany, Italy, and Spain remained free of the Iron Curtain—an edge that turned the tide of the Cold War in favor of the West. As it turns out, Normandy did not win World War II. It won World War III. ★

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Mama was a BOOM-BOOM *Girl*

Suddenly widowed and desperate for money, Cass Keehn put her kids in an orphanage and left home to work in a bomb factory.

by Barbara Ayers

MY MOTHER LOOKED AT my father's face for the last time. It was March 1940, Europe was at war, and the United States was drafting young men into the military—but my father would have no part in it. He'd died of a damaged heart at age 32. In a few moments Mama would take his casket to the family cemetery and leave him in the cold ground. After 12 years of marriage, she was left with two kids and a third on the way. Cass Keehn—Anna Catherine Keehn—was on her own.

At the gravesite with my brother Jerry and me, my mother said her goodbyes. Then she hurried down the hill to our house. As she approached, her situation hit her full force. Her Johnny was forever gone. She unlocked the front door and entered a new, lonely world.

For the next two months my mother slept fitfully from grief and the uncomfortable pregnancy. Spring was pushing summer, and the heat was early and oppressive. Fortunately, Mama had the company of her sisters when she gave birth to Bobby, a boy with black hair and dark eyes, the very image of our dad.

Life took on a rhythm, but as my father's life insurance money ran low, my mother knew she'd soon need an income or she'd lose our house. But she was not prepared. In those days, a single woman in America had it rough. It was practically a necessity for her to marry, both for financial security and to provide definition to her life. Widows were dependent on the largesse of family and friends. Factory work was an option, but factories paid women meager wages. And then there was the problem of what to do with their kids during work hours; there was no day care back then. My mother lived near the knitting mills of Reading, Pennsylvania, which supplied the nation with fabric, stockings, and carpet. She could get a mill job, but it would mean a life of drudgery.

With the entrance of the United States into World War II in December 1941, the working world for women changed completely. Factories lost men to military service, and the government encouraged women to fill the empty spots, especially in vital military-related industries such as shipyards, automotive plants, and munitions factories. My mother began to see government promotional pamphlets everywhere, even in her mail slot. More than six million women across the nation responded to the government call. Mama was one of them.

My mother knew that working in a war-related industry meant good pay—$120 a month. She also knew that Jerry, age 10, and I, age 3, qualified to stay at the Home for Friendless Children, an orphanage in Reading. Once Bobby turned 3, he could live there,

LEFT LIBRARY OF CONGRESS OPPOSITE COURTESY OF BARBARA AYERS

Above: Government posters like this one encouraged women to fill factory jobs vacated by men who left for the war. What encouraged Cass Keehn was that there was plenty of work and it paid well. Opposite: Keehn met Bill Riddle at the Elkton, Maryland, canteen. Riddle, who was stationed 40 miles away at the US Army's Aberdeen Proving Ground, would eventually marry her.

Mama was a BOOM-BOOM *Girl* by Barbara Ayers

too. With us being cared for, my mother would be free to work far from home. So in January 1942 she placed us in the orphanage and sent Bobby to one of her sisters. She put our house on the market and boarded a bus for Cecil County, Maryland, and its munitions plants.

In short order, my mother stood in front of a government official at the US Employment Service Office in the cellar of the Cecil County courthouse in Elkton. The two munitions plants in the county were hiring thousands of girls. With their small, nimble hands and their ability to cope with repetition, young girls—the preferred age was 18 to 25—were perfect for the work. My mother was 30, but that worked to her advantage, as her maturity and life experiences made her valuable as a supervisor of the younger employees. She was hired on the spot by the Triumph Explosives Company, a former fireworks firm. She was about to become a bomb maker—in wartime parlance, a "boom-boom girl."

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

ELKTON, A FARM TOWN of about 3,000 residents, was bursting at the seams after the boom boom girls arrived, boosting the population to more than 12,000. My mother was lucky to find a room to rent in town with two other girls. Each paid $9 a week, which included two meals daily. In a year, the government would ease the town's crowding by building dormitories for the women workers. These roomier quarters would cost each woman $12 weekly. In the meantime, the overcrowding was nearly slum like as workers continued to arrive.

Many of the women came from the mining areas of West Virginia and Pennsylvania, arriving in buses after long hours on the road. A lot of them had never been more than 10 miles from home before. Innocence arrived wide-eyed and willing with no idea what was expected of it. My mother was excited about this new life that would fulfill many needs. Once in her small room, she busily hung up her dresses, folded the slacks and camp shirts she'd wear every day, and placed her regulation footwear and small suitcase of essentials under her provided cot. She was ready for the bus that would take her to work.

At the factory, prior to being put on the shop floor, the women had to line up to be registered, fingerprinted, and photographed and be given physicals. As they waited their turns, they began to lose their verve and patience. They had no idea what to expect and were unprepared for the government's hurry-up-and wait attitude. In time, the women would prove to be extraordinarily flexible and cooperative and, when necessary, innovative.

Triumph Explosives produced 40mm shells for the US Navy's anti-aircraft guns. About 11,000 employees, including some men, worked in numerous buildings preparing a gunpowder mixture and filling shell casings with it. Every day was dangerous, and the company had its own on-site hospital. Gunpowder had a history of spontaneous explosion, and workers who were not always fully attentive compounded the risk.

The women sat on stools behind shatterproof glass panels, reaching around to handle ammo jackets with their bare hands, their fingers always at risk as they touched the unstable powder. The work was backbreaking and tedious; they sat for hours on end with only minimal breaks. Staying awake and alert was difficult during 12 hour shifts. Time out for meals and bathroom breaks was strictly regulated and barely sufficed to rejuvenate. The air was heavy with the sharp pungency of gunpowder. There was no air conditioning, and the heat in the large buildings depleted everyone's energy. Huge, noisy fans did little but circulate hot air and blow gunpowder everywhere—up into noses and down into lungs.

My mother was responsible for the production levels of her division. She helped on the line for part of the day and supervised quality and quantity. She brought to her work the experience she had gained running her mother's household of 10 kids. The women on her shift loved working for her. She would roam long aisles of girls stooping over their work in poor light, tapping the shoulders of those she was choosing to give unscheduled breaks. She knew that alert women were safer workers. She marveled at the general kindness the women showed to one another as they worked together toward a common goal.

Explosions and injuries were common at munitions plants, and Triumph had more accidents than any other. The worst happened in May 1943, killing 15 and injuring 64 (see the sidebar on page 32). Those victims were war casualties who didn't get medals for heroism. More than once my mother was blown across the floor by a blast—at least two times out a window. She required medical treatment not due to any of those "incidents," as the company called them, but due to gunpowder poisoning. Her skin acquired a gray-green cast and she lost all her teeth. For months, she was given other work to do until the powder she'd inhaled was flushed from her system.

Above: Some government posters tried to recruit women for factory jobs by reminding them how important the work was to the war effort. This poster tells potential WOWs—Woman Ordnance Workers—that although this WOW's beau may not be by her side, her war work keeps her by his. She wears work clothes, an ID pin, and gloves—a uniform not so different from the GI's. Opposite: A WOW in an army arsenal in Philadelphia, wearing an apron to protect her clothes from grease as she gauges and weighs .50-caliber cartridges.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Though workers didn't get medals, the government did give awards to companies. Those with high production levels received special pennants to fly at their buildings and special pins to give to their employees—public symbols of success that promoted fierce competition among companies. When the pressure was on to reach a production goal, my mother often worked back-to-back shifts, going days without sleep. Triple shifts were the norm, adding worker exhaustion to an already perilous environment.

Mama wore herself ragged, but she loved it. She made close friends as she risked death right along with the women in her charge. She gained a confidence that she was loath ever after to surrender to anyone, especially to a man. And every Friday, payday, she and thousands of others stood in line at the Western Union office to wire earnings home to the families they were supporting from afar.

It wasn't all work and no play for the girls at Triumph, especially after a USO center was set up in town and the young men from nearby military bases heard about the dances there. Soon, quiet Elkton changed beyond recognition. The place was now crowded with roaming youth, with guys in gorgeous uniforms chasing girls who had little or no supervision. Streets became hard to navigate. Although the money spent at town businesses and paid in rent directly benefited the locals, they found the constant presence of unruly strangers unpleasant and, finally, unwelcome.

For some of the boom boom girls, sleep was less important than dancing at the USO. Curfews were broken. Some girls forfeited their virginity, and everyone knew where to get an abortion. Mama's sweetheart wrote from a French hospital, lamenting the abortions; as an only child from a broken family, he valued new

life. Mama understood him but thought he was disconnected from some of the realities of war, despite that he was wounded in the Normandy invasion in 1944

NOT EVERY MEETING BETWEEN the men and women was illicit. Elkton was a marrying place, where a dozen wedding ceremonies before lunch was commonplace. Those not getting married provided the audiences for those who were. The courthouse was jammed, and justices of the peace did a burgeoning business. In the dormitories, irons were steaming; bolts of silk, tulle, and lace were stored everywhere; dresses were hemmed, re-cut, and used and reused to accommodate all the brides. In an environment of gunpowder and shells, the soft accompaniments of marriage were an appreciated antidote.

Dorm life was another antidote, though that had little to do with the facilities themselves. Proper bathrooms were apparently left out of the government's considerations of the women's needs. Each building had only four bathrooms to accommodate the hundreds of women living in it. Toilets perpetually overflowed and sanitation was questionable. It seemed that the government thought the girls needed a place to sleep and not much else. The quality of the food served in the mess hall was another problem, and it never improved. There were too many starches, and many of the women gained a lot of weight. Others chose to eat less and didn't get proper nutrition.

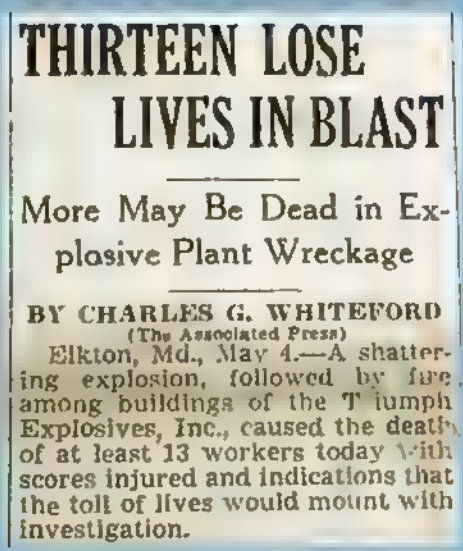
What the dorms did for the women was give them a living space that eased their sense of displacement from home and shaped them into their own community. That community allowed them to speak of their memories and miseries. It also reassured them about their safety and their future. Everyone propped up everyone else. They felt like soldiers and sailors, all serving their nation and sharing in danger. Because everyone contributed, everyone had value.

My knowledge of the dorm life didn't come exclusively from my mother. I saw it for myself when I stayed there a few times. It wasn't common for the women working at Triumph to bring their children to stay, but it was permitted for short periods. Mama brought me in by train and bus. At night I'd be snuggled in her cot with her as the milk she'd purchased for my morning cereal soured in the stuffy locker over our heads. Then she'd wake me, saying, "I need to find you fresh milk. Stay right here in this bed until I come back." I'd stare at her, worried. After all, she'd left me in an orphanage and didn't return for a long time. How would this be different? "Don't

the deadliest blast

MORE ACCIDENTS HAPPENED AT Triumph Explosives in Elkton, Maryland, than at any other munitions plant in the United States during World War II. The Department of Defense reported 41 "incidents" at Triumph—"incidents" here meaning "explosions"—and 23 of the national total of 200 deaths. It's easy enough to figure out why the plant was so dangerous: workers there were making thousands and thousands of 40mm shells for the twin anti-aircraft Bofors cannon found on US Navy and other Allied ships. Each shell contained about 10 ounces of gunpowder to propel a 2-pound projectile.

Triumph's worst accident happened on May 4, 1943. Blasts destroyed five buildings that afternoon, killing 15 and injuring 64. The Department of Defense would eventually conclude that Triumph was trying to manufacture too much too fast. "The area was not designed for the production rate required by the war," a department report stated. Yet even as the debris was being cleared, workers were returned to their jobs.



THIRTEEN LOSE LIVES IN BLAST

More May Be Dead in Explosive Plant Wreckage

BY CHARLES G. WHITEFORD
(The Associated Press)

Elkton, Md., May 4.—A shattering explosion, followed by fire among buildings of the Triumph Explosives, Inc., caused the death of at least 13 workers today with scores injured and indications that the toll of lives would mount with investigation.

An Associated Press report told the nation about Triumph Explosives' worst accident, which happened in 1943. The death toll eventually increased to 15.

As doctors and nurses tended to the wounded, the USO stepped in to help the rest of the workforce. Word went out that a big dance would be held at the Elkton USO hall, and Triumph workers and soldiers and sailors stationed in the area were encouraged to attend. The hope was that entertainment and socializing would ease the workers' shock and anxiety.

Not everyone appreciated the crowd of youths the USO drew—and would continue to draw. As a newspaper from nearby Wilmington, Delaware, would put it in 1944, the "girl warworkers" were making "vice rampant in once staid Elkton." The article stated that "wolves" from nearby military installations were on the hunt for young women every night. Those young women, the article continued, were "mostly uneducated" and didn't know how to handle aggressive, amorous men.

Fortunately, sponsoring dances wasn't the USO's only relief effort. After interviewing Triumph workers about their needs and interests, the organization distributed books and records and sponsored picnics and other events so the women would have something fun and interesting to do with their free time. It also offered classes on dressmaking, cooking, dancing, crafts, and table manners. Workers, GIs, and locals alike supported efforts like these, helping workers get past the tragedy and get their lives back to normal as they continued to face daily dangers doing their part for the war effort.

—Patrice Crowley
contributing editor of *America in WWII*

RIGHT & OPPOSITE: COURTESY OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF CECIL COUNTY

Triumph Explosives published an employee newsletter cleverly titled *TNT: Triumph News Topics*. This photo, featured in a Christmastime edition of *TNT*, featured some company workers and their yuletide wish that their navy shells put a bang in Japan's holiday.

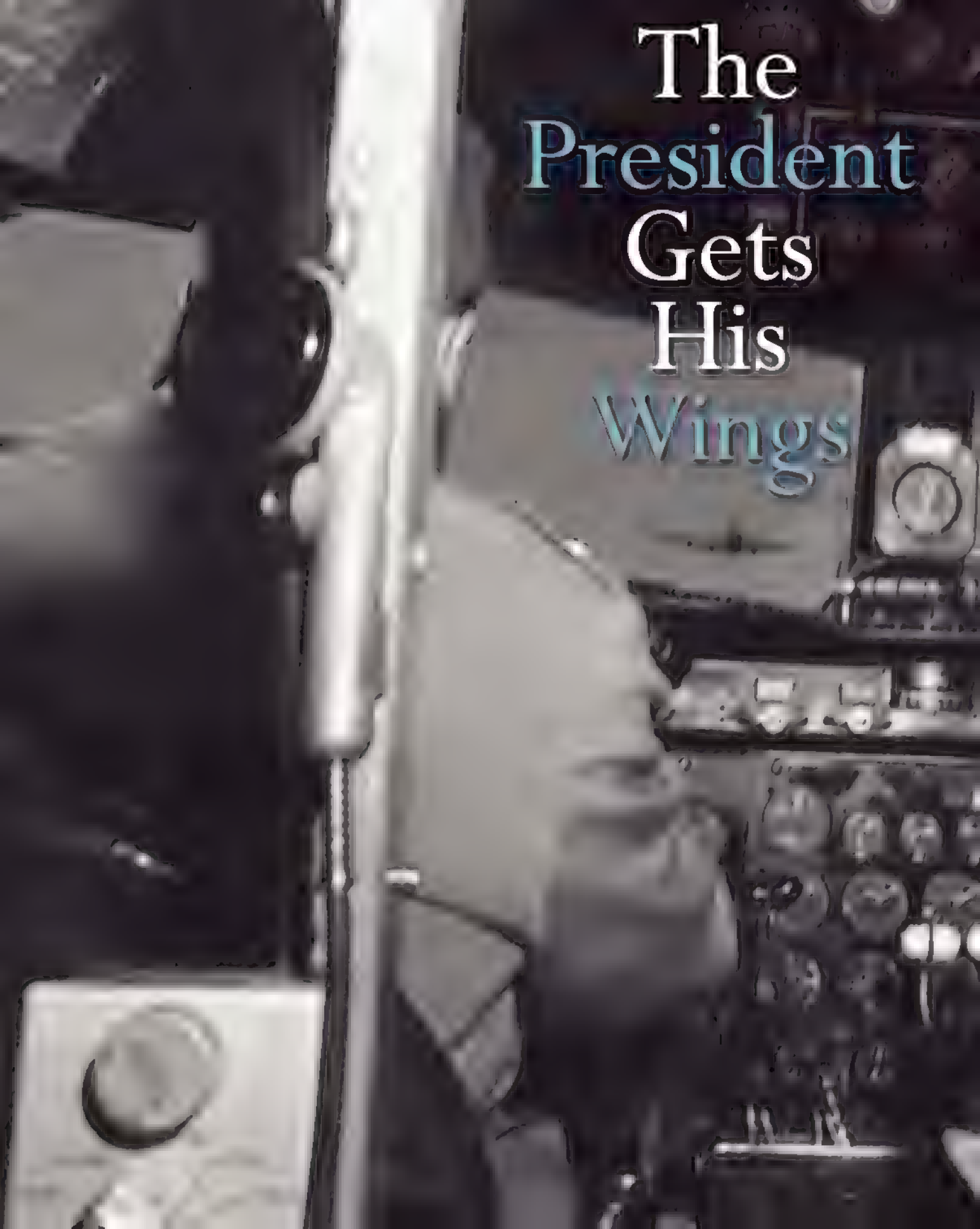
look at me like that," she'd say. "I promise I'll come back."

While she was gone, her dorm mates played with me, brushed and curled my hair, washed my face, and fussed over me like I was a doll found under a Christmas tree. The atmosphere was charged with women swapping clothes, polishing their nails, ironing, smoking, teasing each other about their soldier or sailor boys, and laughing. Their attachment to each other was not unlike that in orphanage relationships. I felt totally at home.

Elkton's boom-boom girls clearly loved their wartime experience. It gave them a new freedom and the opportunity to earn while they served. My mother found that her war job centered and fulfilled her. Work was paramount, and for the rest of her life she suffered from depression when there was nothing meaningful for her to do.

At the end of the war, many of the women at Triumph Explosives left to marry and start families of their own, living happily ever after. For others, like my mother, adjusting to peacetime existence was difficult. Those women had changed forever and were emotionally unable to return to their former lives. They had excelled at taking responsibility and were now unwilling to submit to humdrum routine. But getting used to humdrum was the first order of business for Mama once she married her soldier sweetheart; moved to a small town on the edge of Amish Country in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania; and got her children back with her in 1947. The war was over, the plants had closed, and the boom-boom girls were gone forever. ★

BARBARA AYERS *lives in Medina County, Ohio, near Lake Erie. She adapted this article from her larger childhood memoir. She says her mother talked often about life and work in Elkton, Maryland, during the war.*


The
President
Gets
His
Wings

Human flight was still so new and unpredictable that the Secret Service wouldn't let a president board a plane.

Then came World War II.

FDR needed to travel the globe fast.

by David A. Norris

The President Gets His Wings

by David A. Norris

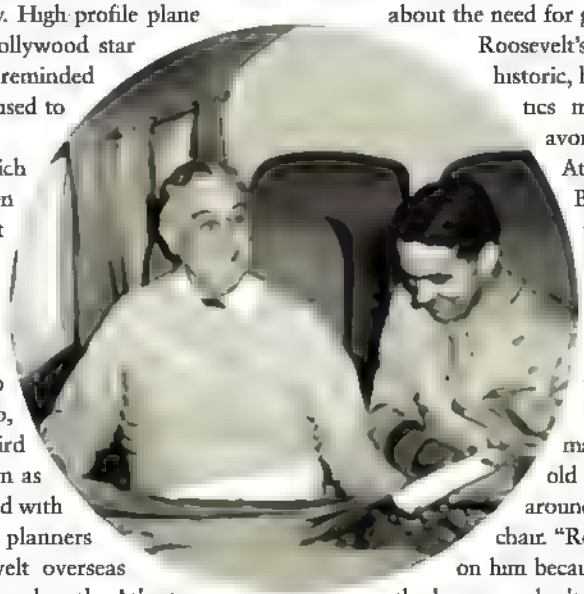
THE AMERICAN MILITARY MEN WAITING at Cairo West Airport on the morning of November 22, 1943, were sweating. The plane scheduled to deliver President Franklin Roosevelt to this British Royal Air Force base outside the Egyptian capital was overdue. Long overdue. Roosevelt was supposed to meet with British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and Chinese Nationalist Government leader Chiang Kai-shek in Cairo the next day. From there, he was to fly to Tehran, Iran, to talk strategy with Churchill and Soviet Premier Josef Stalin on November 28.

Staring anxiously into the early morning skies, the jittery Americans pondered unutterable explanations for Roosevelt's absence. They had good reason to be concerned. Although the Allies had long since defeated the German forces in North Africa, it still was a combat theater. Cairo was filled with Nazi spies, and a word overheard by any one of them could endanger both Roosevelt and the Allied war effort. Moreover, Roosevelt was flying in an all metal monoplane, an evolution of aircraft that had displaced the biplane only about a decade earlier, so long distance travel was still relatively unproven and could be dicey. High profile plane crashes such as the one that killed Hollywood star Carole Lombard in January 1942 reminded Secret Service agents why they had refused to let any president before Roosevelt fly.

Risky or not, air travel was fast, which facilitated face-to-face meetings between Allied leaders. While Roosevelt did not enjoy flying, he did appreciate its convenience. Following the successful American landings in North Africa in November 1942, he and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill agreed to meet in Casablanca, French Morocco, the following January. (Stalin, the third member of what would become known as the Big Three, declined to attend.) Faced with only hazardous options, American planners debated the best way to get Roosevelt overseas. With wolf packs of German U boats prowling the Atlantic Ocean, they decided that sending Roosevelt by plane was safer than risking a long ocean voyage.

That meant considerable legwork for the Secret Service, such as sniffing for leaks about the trip. As Roosevelt's departure date approached, a cab driver in Washington, DC, phoned Agent Michael Reilly, the head of White House security, and told him he had something to discuss. Reilly invited the cabbie to his office, where the man nervously told him he had recently given a ride to a couple of British women. "One of them says to the other, 'My dear, I have something to tell you, but you musn't tell a soul,'" the cabbie said. "'The President is going to Casablanca to meet our Prime Minister.'"

After some investigation, Reilly discovered that the loose lipped cab passenger was the wife of a well known British journalist. "I thanked the driver and assured him that there was nothing to her story," Reilly recalled. "Only in America could a humble taxi driver possess such information and still walk the streets, but that is one of the nice things about America even if it does make things tough for the Secret Service agents." Taking no chances, Reilly dropped by the British embassy to deliver an emphatic message about the need for greater discretion.



FDR LIBRARY

Roosevelt's trip to Casablanca would be not only historic, but also epic in length. Roosevelt's logistics men outlined a circuitous route that avoided the most dangerous areas of the Atlantic while including stops in Trinidad, Brazil, and Gambia. The trip's first leg would cover 1,663 miles, the second 1,227, and the third 2,500. Roosevelt would switch planes in Gambia and settle in for the final 1,500-mile cruise into Casablanca. Secret Service agents tested the route in advance.

It was a challenging itinerary for any man, but particularly so for one 60 years old who was afflicted with polio and got around with the aid of crutches or a wheel chair. "Rough weather aloft was particularly hard on him because he could never brace himself against the bumps and jolts with his legs as we could," Reilly later wrote. "And, although he never spoke of it, he must have realized that he had no chance of crawling from a plane wreck."

For security reasons, the itinerary began with a diversion. Roosevelt left Washington by rail in his special Pullman car, the *Ferdinand Magellan* (see the accompanying sidebar), which headed north as part of a four car train as though he were bound for his family home in Hyde Park, New York. But at Fort Meade, Maryland, the train suddenly switched course and headed south to Miami. There, Roosevelt boarded a plane.

The aircraft selected for the first flight of a sitting president was

PREVIOUS SPREAD: NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Previous spread: From the cockpit of an escort plane, US airmen watch a Douglas C-54 carrying President Franklin Roosevelt to Egypt for the 1943 Cairo Conference. Opposite bottom: Flying was just becoming the norm for national leaders, as the world war forced increased travel on them. All the dignitaries at Cairo came from afar (from left): Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, head of China's Nationalist forces; Roosevelt; British Prime Minister Winston Churchill; and Madame Chiang Kai-shek, the generalissimo's wife. Above: Roosevelt was brand new to flight, having become the first sitting US president to fly only one year earlier. He flashes a smile here aboard the flying boat *Dixie Clipper*, but he didn't enjoy air travel. Opposite, top: A grueling journey to Morocco for the January 1943 Casablanca Conference tested Roosevelt's mettle. Here *Dixie Clipper* sets down in water for a stop in Brazil. Opposite center: During the return trip, Roosevelt celebrates his 61st birthday inside *Dixie Clipper*.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

a Boeing 314 flying boat named *Dixie Clipper*. Representing the pinnacle of technological sophistication and luxury travel when Pan American Airways introduced it in 1938, the 314 was designed specifically for transoceanic service and could take off and land in water. It was slow, with a maximum speed of just 200 mph, but it was also roomy and would make Roosevelt reasonably comfortable.

FDR LIBRARY

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

It was January 11, 1942, when *Dixie Clipper* took off with Lieutenant Howard M. Cone of the US Naval Reserve at the flight controls. In Gambia, Roosevelt boarded a Douglas C-54 Skymaster, a military version of the Douglas DC-4 civilian airliner that was capable of approaching a speed of 280 mph, trimming the flight time to Casablanca. There, Roosevelt held a series of meetings with Churchill and Free French leader Charles de Gaulle between January 14 and 24. The well traveled Churchill, who had experienced more than one close call in the air, later admitted his own concern about flying. "These aeroplane journeys had to be taken as a matter of course during the war," he wrote. "None the less I always regarded them as dangerous excursions."

Roosevelt returned to Washington via the same route by which he'd left, celebrating his 61st birthday on board the *Dixie Clipper* on January 30. The Secret Service breathed a collective sigh of relief on his arrival. But there would be more flights, and the idea of a president flying remained an unsettling one for civilians as well as for the security men. "Aviation is demanding and unforgiving," wrote columnist Christopher Wayne in the Washington (DC) *Evening Star*. "It is still not clear that the obvious advantages of air travel carry greater weight than the peril incurred by risking the life of a president on a journey through the sky."

Despite the risks inherent in flying, a search began for an appropriate official plane for the president. The first candidate was a Consolidated C-87 Liberator Express dubbed *Guess Where II*. Although based on the design of the B-24 Liberator, the C-87 had a checkered safety record, and the Secret Service refused to accept it for presidential service. Relegated to a footnote in aviation history, *Guess Where II* saw duty transporting other dignitaries, including the president's wife, Eleanor.

Meanwhile, in November 1943, the time had come for the multi leg trip to Cairo and Tehran. For Roosevelt, the twin conferences meant more long flights and discomfort. Weighing flying's toll on Roosevelt against the dangers of an ocean voyage, the Secret Service decided this time to risk an Atlantic crossing for the first leg of the trip. The U-boat threat remained, but by late 1943 Allied resources and strength in the Atlantic had grown.

Roosevelt left for Oran, Algeria, aboard the massive new battleship USS *Iowa*, escorted by three destroyers. The trip had some hairy moments, and on November 14 the destroyer USS *William D. Porter* accidentally fired a torpedo that *Iowa* only narrowly avoided. But on November 20 the battleship reached Oran. From there, Reilly and two other Secret Service agents, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, long-time FDR aide Harry Hopkins, and a handful of other military men accompanied Roosevelt on a flight to Tunis, Tunisia, on a C-54 piloted by Major Otis F. Bryan of the US Army

The President Gets His Wings by David A. Norris

Reserve. The following day, Eisenhower gave Roosevelt a tour through nearby battlefields still cluttered with wreckage from the hard fought North Africa campaign. About 10:30 P.M., Roosevelt and his entourage departed for Cairo, where 500 anti-aircraft guns and a brigade of British infantry guarded the conference site. Eight squadrons of Royal Air Force fighters stationed in northern Egypt were ready to respond to any German air attack that might come from the Mediterranean.

U.S. AIR FORCE

The first aircraft built specifically for a president, *Sacred Cow* was engineered by Douglas Aircraft not only for comfort, but also to accommodate Roosevelt in his wheelchair. Innovations included this specially designed elevator that lifted Roosevelt in and out of the plane.

ROOSEVELT'S PLANE WAS scheduled to land at Cairo West Airport at 7 A.M. on the 22nd. As the sun rose at 6:25, a detachment of fighter planes assigned to escort the C-54 to the airport took off and flew south to the rendezvous point. The pilots found only empty sky. They circled until their fuel ran low and returned to their base. A second batch of fighters went up and met with the same result.

To the government and military brass awaiting Roosevelt's arrival, the explanation for his tardiness proved a relief, if a little irksome. After the plane left Tunis, Roosevelt had informed Reilly that he wanted to make a sightseeing detour over the Nile River and the Pyramids. With orders to maintain radio silence, Bryan could not contact anyone about the change in flight plans. At 7:00 Reilly woke Roosevelt, who was "thrilled by the monuments, the Sphinx, and the Nile," Reilly later wrote. "Otis Bryan circled the plane constantly to give the Boss a good view. Of the Pyramids FDR said, 'Man's desire to be remembered is colossal.'" Bryan finally set the plane down at Cairo West at 9:30 A.M. "Our unreportable sight-seeing jaunt set the Cairo air headquarters on its ear," Reilly noted. "...When we pulled into that city, sans escort and two hours late, you could hear ulcers popping and the brass sizzling all over headquarters."

Roosevelt's subsequent trip to Tehran was no less worrisome for Reilly. For Bryan, it meant flying through mountain passes at no higher than 8,000 feet, due to Roosevelt's sinus condition and the high blood pressure of his military aide, Major General Edwin M. Watson. "I am glad we did not go in by train for we saved much time—No bandits in the air," Roosevelt wrote in his diary. "But I still don't like flying."

The flight plan from Tehran to Dakar, Senegal—from where a French destroyer would deliver Roosevelt back to the *Iowa*—

FDR's Rolling Fortress

When President Franklin Roosevelt needed to get to far-off places within the United States, he rode the rails rather than fly. And he rode them in his own special car manufactured by the Pullman Company—the souped-up *Ferdinand Magellan*.

Built in 1928, *Magellan* was one of the last private railroad cars made in the United States. In 1942, it was completely redesigned for presidential service and given the official designation US Car No. 1. From the outside, it still looked much like any other Pullman car, but it was a rolling fortress. Nickel-steel plating lined its walls, roof, and floor, and its windows were three-inch-thick bullet-resistant glass.

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

Roosevelt and his wife, Eleanor, on the back of *Ferdinand Magellan*. What looked like a typical Pullman was in fact a finely appointed armored car.

Interior upgrades included an enlarged observation room that allowed Roosevelt to take in the landscape, as he enjoyed doing. There was an expanded dining and conference area. Work space was plentiful. Phones were installed that could be connected to local lines when *Magellan* pulled into a station. (While the train was in transit, US Army Signal Corps men in an accompanying car could send and receive radio messages for Roosevelt.)

The refurbished car also came with its own wheelchair, a specially built model that was narrow enough to navigate the car's tight aisles and doorways. A mini-elevator was attached to the rear observation platform to accommodate the chair.

With all these upgrades and additions, *Magellan* outweighed a standard Pullman by more than 40 tons. Roosevelt's successor, Harry S. Truman, also used the car during his presidency and said it "gave nightmares to every railroad engineer who had to pull it on the rear of his train."

The *Ferdinand Magellan* doesn't move around much anymore. It's on display at the Gold Coast Railroad Museum in Miami, Florida. In the midst of restoration, it's not left open to the public, but visitors can schedule private tours to see the inside.

—*David A. Norris*

US AIR FORCE

Air Force One **is the US president's plane. But the name wasn't coined until Dwight Eisenhower's time in the White House in the fifties. So the Douglas VC-54C here, christened for Roosevelt in 1944, was free to be dubbed *Sacred Cow*.**

included a stop on the Mediterranean island of Malta on December 8. During the approach to the island, the hydraulics that controlled the plane's wing flaps malfunctioned. But Bryan managed to land the bulky aircraft without using the flaps, and without anyone even noticing there was a problem.

While Roosevelt was traveling, Douglas Aircraft Company had been working on an official presidential plane. A one-of-a kind aircraft that combined a C-54A fuselage with C-54B wings, the new VC-54C looked much like the C-54s Roosevelt knew. Engineers and other skilled personnel had tailored it to fit Roosevelt's unique needs. For both practical and security reasons, they had added an elevator by which Roosevelt could enter and leave the plane. This eliminated the need for airport ramps, which might show up on enemy reconnaissance photos and betray travel plans. Also added were a conference room and bulletproof windows, including a picture window. The painstakingly designed and crafted plane earned the moniker *Sacred Cow*.

Roosevelt used the plane just once, to attend the Yalta Conference in February 1945. Yalta, located on the southern coast of the Soviet Union's battle-scarred Crimean Peninsula, along the Black Sea, was a less-than ideal meeting place. But Stalin, citing his need to closely monitor the Soviet war effort, had declined to leave the country. The nearest airport that was still functioning was 130 miles north of Yalta, at Saki. Inspecting the area beforehand, Reilly was dismayed to learn that Russian anti aircraft batteries in the region sometimes fired at American planes by mistake. At his insistence, an American was stationed at each battery to coordinate communication and ensure that no accidents endangered Roosevelt's plane.

On board the cruiser USS *Quincy*, Roosevelt crossed the Atlantic and much of the Mediterranean Sea to Malta, where *Sacred Cow* waited. The new plane departed for Yalta at 3 A.M. on February 3, one of a stream of four-engine aircraft carrying more than 700 American and British passengers. At daybreak, American fighter planes appeared over Greece to escort *Sacred Cow* and the others to Saki, which they reached safely just after noon. After a week of discussions with Stalin and Churchill, Roosevelt boarded *Sacred Cow* for what would be his final flight, to a US-run airbase at Deversoir, Egypt. He then returned to the States on *Quincy*.

Just two months later, Roosevelt died. Harry S. Truman replaced him as president, first in a line of successors who would take air travel for granted. Roosevelt, having occupied the Oval Office in the adolescent days of aviation as a world war demanded his increasing attention across the globe, had fulfilled a seeming destiny to bring wings to the US presidency. ★

David Norris *writes regularly for* America in WWII. *His article on beer for the troops, "Morale in a 12-Ounce Can," appeared in our April 2014 issue.*

SPECIAL EVENTS SECTION

AMERICA IN WWII

The War • The Home Front • The People

2014 WWII AIR SHOWS

Go where engines rumble and warbirds roar across the sky...

GO TO A WORLD WAR II AIR SHOW!

And tell 'em you heard about it in *AMERICA IN WWII*.

Check websites or call to confirm details before planning your travel.

WWII Heritage Days

April 26–27 • Peachtree City, GA

Historic aircraft plus antique cars, vintage military vehicles, reenactors portraying Allied and Axis troops, 1940s hangar dance, recognition of local WWII veterans. Opening ceremony pays tribute to women who served in the military and on the home front. Admission (suggested): adults,$5; under 5, free. Hosted by the Commemorative Air Force Dixie Wing. Atlanta Regional Airport-Falcon Field. 678-364-1110. www.wwiidays.org

2014 Central Texas Airshow

May 2–4 • Temple, TX

Includes flying WWII aircraft, among them an AT-6 Texan trainer and the *Spirit of Hondo*, a WWII Douglas C-47. "Tora! Tora! Tora!" reenactment of Pearl Harbor attack. Admission: adult weekend pass, $25; adult one day, $12; kids 6–12 one day, $4. Draughon-Miller Central Texas Regional Airport. www.centraltexasairshow.com

Warbirds Over the Beach Airshow

May 16–18 • Virginia Beach, VA

Extensive collection of WWII fighters, trainers, bombers, and liaison craft from the Military Aviation Museum and other collections. WWII aircraft in flight, warbird rides. Reenactors, hangar dance, 1940s music. Admission: adult weekend pass, $50; adult one day, $30; youth weekend pass, $25; youth one day, $15. Discount for online purchase by May 10. Military Aviation Museum, Virginia Beach Airport, 1341 Princess Anne Road. 757-721-PROP. www.VBairshow.com

MCAS Beaufort Airshow

May 16–18 • Cherry Point, NC

Includes aerial demonstrations by vintage AT-6 Texans, B-25 Mitchell, F4U Corsair, along with modern planes, jets, and helicopters. Douglas SBD-5, Nakajima B5N "Kate," and Zero N7757 on the ground. Admission: free. Premium seating available for fee. Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point. 252-466-7550. www.cherrypointairshow.com

Discover Aviation Days

May 31–June 1 • Blaine, MN

WWII fighters, trainers, and bombers flying and on display, together with non-military and modern planes. Veterans, historical displays, hangar dance with 1940s swing band. Anoka County Airport Admission: free. Parking fee. Info@DiscoverAviationDays.org 763-568-6072. www.discoveraviationdays.org

Mid-Atlantic Air Museum's 24th Annual WWII Weekend

June 6–8 • Reading, PA

Large, all-WWII airshow with 80 WWII aircraft flying and/or on display, 200 military vehicles, daily flight demonstrations, warbird rides, P-61 Black Widow restoration display, ground combat simulation, living history encampment with WWII flea market and vendors, 1940s entertainment, hangar dance. Admission: adults, $23 in advance, $25 at gate; ages 6–12, $10 in advance, $12 at gate; ages 5 and younger, free; three-day pass, $62 in advance, $70 at gate. Mid-Atlantic Air Museum, Reading Regional Airport. 610-372-7333. www.maam.org

THE MID ATLANTIC AIR MUSEUM'S 24TH ANNUAL

WWII WEEKEND

JUNE 6TH - 7TH - 8TH, 2014

See the progress of MAAM's Rare Northrop P-61 restoration on the ramp!

Daily Warbird Airshow, Vintage Aircraft Rides,
80 Restored Vintage Aircraft, 200 Military Vehicles,
120 Vendor Military Collectors Flea Market,
1,700 Living History Performers,
1940's Entertainment,
USO Style Hangar Dances Friday & Saturday Evenings

Mid Atlantic Air Museum,
Reading Regional Airport, Reading, PA
Adult $25 / Child $12, FREE Parking

For More Info & Tickets, Visit Our Website www.maam.org 610-372-7333

CALIFORNIA INTERNATIONAL
Airshow
AT SALINAS MUNICIPAL AIRPORT
SEPTEMBER 27-28.2014
United States Air Force Thunderbirds and the
70th Anniversary tribute to the Normandy Invasion
featuring the Liberty Jump Team and warbirds from WWII
including a B5N that was used in the movie Pearl Harbor.
Visit SALINASAIRSHOW.COM or call 1.888.845.SHOW

Golden West Regional Flyin & Airshow
June 6–8 • Olivehurst CA

A close-up look at hundreds of aircraft including WWII warbirds, homebuilts, antiques, aerobatic, ultralights, hot air balloons, racers, and current military aircraft. Admission: Friday, June 6, free; Saturday & Sunday, contact sponsor. Yuba County Airport (MYV). info@goldenwestflyin.org. 530-852-0321. www.goldenwestflyin.org

Legacy Flight Museum Air Show
June 14 • Rexburg, ID

Biennial show, last held in 2012, features WWII and later warbirds, flight demonstrations, and aerobatics. Admission: free
Legacy Flight Museum, Airport Road
legacyflightmuseum@yahoo.com. 208-359-5905
www.legacyflightmuseum.com/airshow.aspx

Olympic Air Show
June 14–15 • Tumwater, Washington

Alongside aerobatic acts and other flight demonstrations, show spotlights historic aircraft from its host, the Olympic Flight Museum. The museum will debut its newly restored Goodyear FG-1D Corsair, which will be the featured aerobatic performer. Admission: $12 online, $15 at door; age 6 or younger, free. Olympia Regional Airport. info@olympicflightmuseum.com. 360-705-3925. www.olympicairshow.com

Vectren Dayton Air Show
June 28–29 • Dayton, OH

Modern aircraft predominate in this large show, but the North American AeroShell Aerobatic Team, flying WWII-vintage AT-6G Texan trainers, will also perform. Admission: adults, $20; children and seniors, $15. Dayton International Airport. info@daytonairshow.com. 937-898-5901. www.daytonairshow.com.

Gathering of Eagles XVIII Air Show
July 19–20 • Willoughby, OH

This year's show features Korean War aircraft, but WWII warbirds including an A-26 Invader, C-47 Skytrain, F4U Corsair, B-25 Mitchell, and a T-6 Texan trainer will also be on display or in the air. Antique car show, reenactors, living history. Presented by the United States Aviation Museum. Admission: adults, $13; couples, $25.00; 4–12 years old, $8 (two for $15); under 4, free. Lost Nation Airport. hapbertichon@yahoo.com. 440-759-4148. www.usam.us/index.htm

Boeing Seafair Air Show
August 1–3 • Seattle, WA

A Grumman F6F Hellcat, along with warbirds and vintage aircraft from the private Flying Heritage Collection will appear among the show's mostly modern aerial performers. Show promises heart-pounding aerobatics over Lake Washington. Admission: Friday, free; Saturday & Sunday, $25 until April 30, $30 through July 30, $35 after July 31. Located on Genesee Park/Lake Washington. info@seafair.com. 206-728-0123. www.seafair.com

Quad City Air Show
August 9–10 • Davenport, IA

Show includes warbirds from Washington State's Heritage Flight Museum, and AeroShell Aerobatics Team flying AT-6G Texan trainers. Admission: adults, $15; ages 6–10, $5; under 5, free. Davenport Municipal Airport. QCASBoss@aol.com. www.quadcityairshow.com

2014 WWII AIR SHOWS

Greenwood Lake Air Show

August 15–17 • West Milford, NJ

Warbirds and vintage aircraft flying and on display along with modern air show performers all three days. Admission: adults, $25; ages 65 and older and military, $15; ages 4–12, $10; ages 4 or younger, free. • Greenwood Lake Airport. greenwoodlakeairshow@gmail.com. 973-728-7721 www.greenwoodlakeairshow.com

Duluth Air and Aviation Expo 2014

August 23–24 • Duluth, MN

Includes Normandy Tribute with Liberty Jump Team reenacting D-Day air jump from a C-47 Skytrain, and a strafing run by B-25 Mitchell *Show Me*, with P-51 Mustang fighter escort. Admission: adults, $17 in advance, $23 at gate; youth, $12 in advance, $17 at gate; children, free. Duluth International Airport. info@duluthairshow.com. 218-628-9996. www.duluthairshow.com/2014/index.html

Warbird Roundup, P-38 Lightning Days

August 30–31 • Nampa, ID

Features the Lockheed P-38 Lightning *23 Skidoo*, and F4U-1A Corsair, and perhaps a B-25 Mitchell bomber. Admission: Check website closer to event dates. Warhawk Air Museum, 201 Municipal Way. suepaul@warhawkairmuseum.org. 208-465-6232. www.warhawkairmuseum.org

Winston-Salem Air Show

September 13–14 • Winston-Salem, NC

WWII and modern military aircraft displays and flyovers, including P-51 Mustang, C-54 Skymaster, B-25 Mitchell, C-46 Commando, C-47 Skytrain, FWP-149D utility plane, A-26 Invader, and T-6 Texan trainer. Admission: check website closer to event date. Pre-show discount tickets available online beginning June 1. Smith Reynolds Airport. wsairshow@smithreynolds.org. 336-767-2832 www.wsairshow.com

Lake of the Ozarks Air Show

September 20 • Camdenton, MO

WWII P-51 Mustang, TBM-3E Avenger, and modern airplanes. Warbird rides, flying demonstrations and aerobatics, and static displays. Rain date September 21. Admission: free Camdenton Memorial Airport, 20 Airport Drive. info@camdenchamber.com. 573-346-2227. www.lakeoftheozarksairshow.com

Hagerstown Wings & Wheels Expo 2014

September 21 • Hagerstown, MD

Historic and modern aircraft, classic vehicles, history demonstrations. Admission: free. Donations to the Hagerstown Aviation Museum welcome. Hagerstown Regional Airport info@HagerstownAviationMuseum.org. 301-733-8717. www.wingsandwheelsexpo.com

2014 WWII AIR SHOWS

Leesburg Airshow
September 27 • Leesburg, VA

Warbirds and vintage planes, flying and on display. Includes P-51 Mustang, SNJ/T6 Texan, Grumman G-21 Goose, Douglas DC-3 Admission: free. Leesburg Executive Airport. www.leesburgairshow.com

California International Airshow
September 27-28 • Salinas, CA

Modern aircraft with WWII warbirds and vintage aircraft including Douglas DC-4, B-25J Mitchell, PV-2 Harpoon, C-47 Skytrain, F4U Corsair, and P-51 Mustang Check website for updates. Admission check website closer to event dates. Salinas Municipal Airport. info@salinasairshow.com. 831-754-1983 or 1-888-845-SHOW www.salinasairshow.com

Wings & Wheels—A Georgetown Fall Festival
October 4 • Georgetown, DE

Warbirds, reenactments, B-25 Mitchell flight experiences ($425 per seat). Honored guests include Doolittle Raider Lieutenant Colonel Dick Cole and Second Lieutenant Russell Gackenbach, navigator of B-29 *Necessary Evil*, which photographed the Hiroshima bombing. Admission: free. Sussex County Airport www.wings-wheels.com

MCAS Miramar Air Show
October 4–5 • San Diego, CA

WWII and modern military aircraft flying and on display. Admission: Check website closer to event dates. Marine Corps Air Station Miramar. 858-577-9201. www.miramarairshow.com

Commemorative Air Force Airsho
Oct 11–12 • Midland, TX

Large and active flying display of WWII warbirds, including B-29 Fifi. "Tora! Tora! Tora!" reenactment of Pearl Harbor attack. Admission: adults, $20; ages 6–12, $5; ages 5 and under, free Active US military with military ID card, free. WWII and Korean War veterans and one guest receive free admission, special parking, and seating in a designated tent. Midland International Airport. 888-945-3008. www.airsho.org

Wings Over North Georgia
October 18–19 • Rome, GA

WWII warbirds on display. Geico Skytypers aerobatics team flying WWII SNJ-2 trainers, air demonstrations by F4U Corsair and P-51D Mustang. Admission: adults, $15; ages 6–17, $10; 5 or younger, free; military, fire, and police personnel, $10. Richard B. Russell Regional Airport. jlcairshow@att.net. 770-331-1621. www.wingsovernorthgeorgia.com

Copperstate Fly-In
October 23–25 • Casa Grande, AZ

Warbirds and vintage aircraft and modern small planes in flight and on display. Airplane rides. Admission: adults $15 on Friday and Saturday, $5 on Thursday; 15 or younger when accompanied by a paying adult, free. All-event admission is $25 per person. Casa Grande Municipal Airport. 520-233-1385. www.copperstate org

Warbirds Over Paso
November 1 • Paso Robles, CA

WWII warbirds on the ground and in the air, plus aircraft rides Admission: check website closer to event date. Hosted by Estrella Warbirds Museum and Planes of Fame Air Museum. Paso Robles Municipal Airport. 805-237-3877. www.ewarbirds.org/airshow

Wings Over Houston Air Show
November 1–2 • Houston, TX

The 30th annual Wings Over Houston focuses on Vietnam War aircraft but includes WWII warbirds and WWII veterans. A WWII Messerschmitt Me 262 *Schwalbe* ("Swallow") jet fighter will be present. Admission: check website closer to event date Ellington Airport. 713-266-4492. www.wingsoverhouston.com

Stuart Air Show 2013
November 1–2 • Stuart, FL

Aeroshell Aerobatic Team flying AT-6 Texans, static displays, WWII military reenactors. Admission: adults, $15 pre-purchased, $20 at gate; veterans and active military, free; 10 or younger, free. Witham Field. 772-781-4882. www.stuartairshow.com

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WAR STORIES

A WWII Scrapbook

VOLLEYBALL WITH THE BIG GUNS

THERE WERE FOUR OF US from our squadron that were being relieved early.... In July 1945 we went for R&R at Admiral's Beach Shack in Kaneohe Bay on the east side of Oahu. We were supposed to be medically checked over and goof off for 30 days and play volleyball.

One day, three old but trim guys wearing shorts asked if they could join us. There was something familiar about them, so we said "Please." We shook hands and gave first names all around, and when the handsome gray haired gentleman said "Chet," it hit like a ton of bricks that this was Chester Nimitz, Bull Halsey, and John Dale Price. [Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz was commander in chief of Pacific Ocean Areas. Admiral William "Bull" Halsey, Jr., commanded the US Third Fleet. Rear Admiral John D. Price commanded Fleet Air Wing 2.] What a memory, for these were the finest gentlemen I ever met, laughing and enjoying the game and never talking about their roles. They just asked in general terms about our parts, for they already knew the broad details.

A few days later, the four of us were transferred to the Wailea BOQ [Bachelor Officer Quarters] at Pearl Harbor and were to catch a ride home aboard a jeep carrier [an escort carrier]. We were scheduled to go aboard the carrier the next morning at 0800 [8 A.M.]. That night, to kill time, we went to an outside movie. We sat on palm logs and the film screen was outdoors.

Less than 100 yards away at the mooring was the cruiser *Omaha*. [The USS *Omaha (CL-4)* served in the Atlantic. Perhaps this was the *Omaha*-class cruiser *Detroit (CL-8)*?] We had heard that a big super bomb had been dropped on Japan, and the scuttlebutt was all over the place and about every scenario. In the middle of a Roy Rogers film, all of a sudden the cruiser began blowing every horn and alarm and firing every flare they had..., and the same thing was happening to each ship.

COURTESY OF CLARK S. SLAYMAN

It was a strange feeling.... I had carried a bottle of King's Ransom scotch through out my navy time (yes, I know, against the rules, just like everyone else) for this moment. The four of us went up to my room at the BOQ, and I found four paper cups and poured out a real man's jolt. We sat on a couple of bunks, but no one had anything to say or any desire to speak. I never sipped or tasted the treasured scotch nor, I believe, did anyone else.

I cannot explain it, but as I poured the drink down the sink, my mood was not of elation or joy, but very flat, almost depressed. I do not recall any boisterous shouting or hooting. I am still puzzled by our reaction.... It's also funny because this is a side of the era that we just never talked about. It just *was*.

Clark S. Slayman
wartime US Navy lieutenant and pilot
As told to his daughter, **Carol Slayman Fust**
Marietta, Georgia

HIS WOUNDS SAVED HIM

ON OUR LAST MISSION, on June 26, 1944, we bombed an oil refinery near Vienna, Austria. We encountered several German fighter planes and heavy flak. Focke-Wulf Fighters shot our B-24 Liberator down.

I was hit in the head and left arm by 20mm anti aircraft fire. I spent a few weeks in a Vienna hospital and the remainder in Stalag 4 [Stalag Luft IV, a German POW camp for airmen] in northern Poland. By early February 1945 the Russian offensive approached the camp. But I went out with the wounded, spending the rest of the war in a hospital. [The stalag's remaining inmates made a deadly forced march. See the editor's note at the end.] I was eventually discharged in December 1945.

I will be 90 soon. I have to wonder how we survived the Second World War. Fate? Luck?

Joe Abbondondelo
wartime technical sergeant,
455th Bombardment Group,
Fifteenth Air Force
Wantagh, New York

Editor's Note: *On February 6, 1945, as the Soviets approached Stalag Luft IV, guards forced nearly 8,000 POWs to set out on a grueling, two-month, 500-mile march. Hundreds died on that "Black March."*

A LIBERTY SHIP SAILOR'S WAR

ON ONE OCCASION aboard a US Liberty ship, a seaman was walking forward.

Above: Wartime US Navy pilot Clark Slayman (here describing a dogfight with a Japanese fighter) played volleyball during R&R on Oahu with three top admirals. Slayman was at Pearl Harbor when the atomic bombs were dropped on Japan.

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He thought he was stepping over a line (rope) on the deck, but no—it was actually a crack in the hull!

Many Liberty ships [US built war cargo ships] crossed the Atlantic, but too many were sunk by German U-boats that were seemingly everywhere, costing us many, many lives.

I'm recalling events that happened to the US Merchant Marine, a fleet of ships with stalwart crews, a fleet our fighting men depended on. I sailed the Pacific on Liberties and tankers during the war's last year on trips to the Hawaiian Islands, Guam, Persian Gulf, Alaska, and Japan, all of which hold many memories.

So when you hear stories about the armed forces that won the war, please think of the merchant seamen whose purpose and lives supported them.

Carl Torell
wartime chief cook and baker,
US Merchant Marine
Vancouver, Washington

DISAPPEARING, REAPPEARING SHIP

On December 7, 1941, my uncle Jim Bridgman was a chief in charge of the black gang [the engine room crew] below decks aboard the USS *Black Hawk (AD-9)*, a destroyer tender assigned to the US Asiatic Fleet. The *Black Hawk* was reported missing more than once during her WWII service. One day we received a letter from a lady in New Zealand, and at the end of her letter, she said Jim had said hello. Then we knew he was alive. In 1943,

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

The USS *Black Hawk*, a destroyer tender assigned to the US Asiatic Fleet, was reported missing more than once during her WWII service.

the *Black Hawk* came back to Pearl Harbor, where I was stationed at the section base. Then I spent a lot of good times on the old *Black Hawk*

Robert G Bridgman
wartime carpenter's mate, second class,
US Navy
Waynesville, North Carolina

Editor's Note: *The globetrotting* Black Hawk *started her WWII service Down Under but spent most of the war in chilly Alaskan waters—rough treatment for a ship launched in 1913!*

AMERICA IN WWII LINGO!

1940s GI and civilian patter

latrine rumor: *unfounded gossip started by an ill-informed source.*

6-and-20 tootsie: *a girl worth the 6 demerits and 20 rounds of marching an aviation cadet got for returning to base late.*

sugar report: *letter from a sweetheart.*

Send your War Stories submission, with a relevant photo if possible, to WAR STORIES, America in WWII, 4711 Queen Avenue, Suite 202, Harrisburg, PA 17109, or to warstories@americainwwii.com. By sending stories and photos, you give us permission to publish and republish them.

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AMERICA IN WWII
The War • The Home Front • The People

I WAS THERE

Step One: Survive Omaha

by Wilbert "Bill" Gates • as told to Peter Jedick

Among the thousands of men who spilled from landing craft to hit Normandy Beaches on D-Day (above, left, in an aerial photo) was Corporal Wilbert Gates of Cleveland, Ohio (above, right, at a stateside camp). He went over the side of a Higgins boat with his gear and part of a heavy machine gun, but came ashore on Omaha Beach with only a .45-caliber pistol.

WILBERT "BILL" GATES TRACES HIS ANCESTRY *back to Revolutionary War general Horatio Gates. Despite this DNA connection, there was nothing especially martial in Gates's upbringing or disposition—no hint he would one day be a soldier. But a soldier he would be, hitting bullet-shredded Omaha Beach on D-Day and fighting his way across Europe.*

Born on January 7, 1926, Gates grew up an only child in Cleveland, Ohio, so close to Lake Erie that he could ride his bike to the beach. He spent his summers fishing, swimming, and playing Little League baseball. As he got older, he liked to work on cars. He was attending East Technical High School when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor.

Gates was no bruiser, standing just 5 feet 6 inches and weighing 150 pounds. But his uncle had been killed at Pearl Harbor aboard the USS Arizona (BB-39) *and his truck-driver dad had served in World War I as a quartermaster. So, encouraged by neighborhood friends, Gates quit school and enlisted at the tender age of 17.*

Gates told his WWII story here—of army life, D-Day, and fighting in Europe—over the phone from his home on February 21, 2014.

I WAS ONLY 15 YEARS OLD when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. I was all gung ho to kill the Japs. All my friends were going gangbusters and joining the marines, so in the 11th grade [1943]

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I dropped out of school and enlisted in the air force [the US Army Air Forces].

I was only 17, so my parents needed to sign for me. My mom didn't like the idea, but my dad said he'd sign as long as I didn't join the marines. "They get killed left and right," he told me.... I couldn't do the navy because I got seasick real easy. So I joined the air force.

Then a funny thing happened on my way to basic training. We were taking a train to Daytona Beach, Florida, when it stopped in Atlanta.... They took the whole train of us and put us in the army and sent us to Camp Blanding, Florida, instead....

Later on, when I was in France, me and a friend would be laying on our backs watching all the B-17s going over to bomb Germany. Then we'd watch them coming back, and there were a whole lot less of them. My friend said to me, "Aren't you glad you didn't stay in the air force?"

...Basic training was only five weeks. They taught us how to march and shoot a rifle. I never fired a gun before I went in the army. My dad didn't like them. He wouldn't even let me have a BB gun.

They gave me a bolt action '03 Springfield rifle from World War I. It was accurate but hard to use. It was hard to reload the magazine. Then they gave me a brand new M1 [Garand rifle]. I was good at shooting it but never got the chance to carry one. [Instead] they sent me to shoot mortars and gave me a .45-caliber pistol.

The .45 wasn't very accurate. You'd be lucky to hit someone 25 yards away. I remember one drill sergeant telling us, "If you have to use it against some Germans or Japs, empty the cartridge and then throw it at them."

When I was at Camp Blanding I got a pass to the big city, Jacksonville. As soon as I got off the bus, a cop stopped me. He thought I'd stolen some GI's uniform. I showed him my pass, but he still didn't believe me. He called the base and luckily the lieutenant that answered the phone knew me. After that I went right back to camp. It wasn't worth it.

After basic training we were allowed to go home for 10 days.... So I took the train to Cleveland to say goodbye to my relatives, because we knew we weren't coming back until after the war was over. My dad was an old horse soldier in World War I. He only gave me one piece of advice: "Keep your ass down so it don't get shot off."

Then I took another train to Camp Shelby, Mississippi. They put me in a heavy weapons company and taught me how to fire an 81mm mortar and a .30-caliber, heavy, water-cooled machine gun. Our job was to support the rifle companies with heavy fire. The heavy machine gun...had a big water barrel attached to it to keep it from overheating

I was sent to Fort Benning, Georgia, for two weeks to show the 101st Airborne how to operate my heavy-duty machine gun. After I watched two jumps, they asked me if I wanted to join them. I saw all the guys breaking their ankles and legs, so I said, "I don't think so." They said they'd pay me an extra $50 a month. I said, "I wouldn't do that for an extra *$500* a month."

They shipped me overseas on a big ocean liner filled with troops.... I went overseas out of New York's harbor and came back to New York City, but I never saw the Statue of Liberty. Both times I was in my room throwing up.... The German U-boats were patrolling the waters, so we had a destroyer escort, but sometimes the swells were so big that the destroyers would disappear from sight.

When we got to England, we trained at Southampton. They taught us how to climb down the ropes from a big ship into a little ship, the landing crafts. We were part of the 1st Division, but we weren't *really* part of the 1st Division. There were a lot of casual regiments that they lumped together before D-Day. I was a corporal in M Company [which would be assigned to multiple parent units during the course of the war]. We had about 210 guys in four platoons. Mine was the heavy weapons company.

On D-Day I was no hero. I was a scared little guy. I was only 5 foot 6 inches tall and weighed 150 pounds. I was only 18 years old. The other guys were a couple years older than me, and I was still growing. (...By the time I got out [of the army] I was 5 foot 9 and weighed 185 pounds.)

They sent us to Omaha Beach. It was the toughest. The other ones were a cakewalk compared to us.... We were in the third wave. By that time the Germans had us zeroed in pretty good

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Gates found shelter from enemy machine guns behind a wrecked vehicle on Omaha. Eventually, he reached Omaha's seawall and joined the effort to secure the beach. By day's end, the beachhead was safe and bustling with activity (above).

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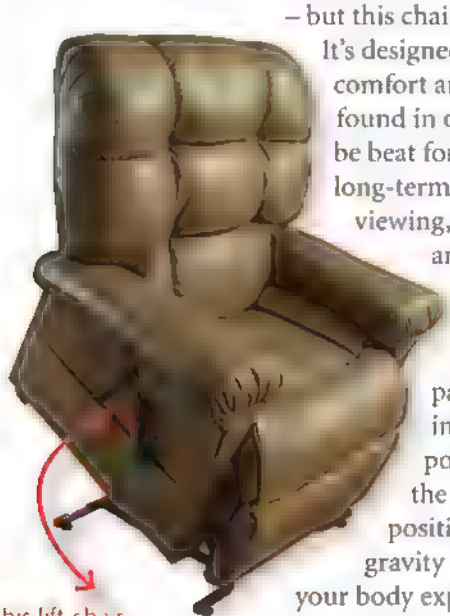

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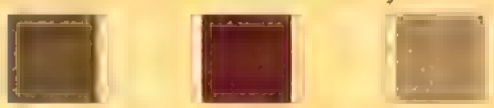

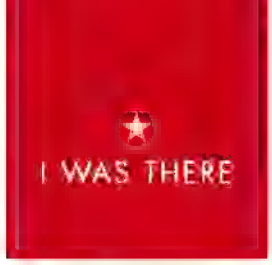

...I heard this sound, it sounded like hail hitting an aluminum awning, and I asked what it was. They said it was machine-gun bullets hitting the front of the landing craft. They had some powerful machine guns pointed at us

Our sailor was pretty good at bringing in the landing craft. He got us up close. Some of the other guys chickened out and didn't want to come in too close, so the first guys fell in the deep water and drowned

As soon as they dropped the ramp in front of the landing craft, the machine-gun bullets started coming in. Most of the guys who went out the ramp got killed. I was lucky. I was in the back.... I heard a guy say, "To hell with this, I'm going over the side." That sounded like a good idea, so I did the same thing. There were about 45 guys in my craft, but only about 10 of us made it, mostly the guys who went over the side like me.... Even a lot of the guys who went over the side drowned.... Being a Cleveland boy is what saved me; I was a good swimmer.

I was the gunner in a heavy weapons company, [so] they strapped a 70 pound receiver [main portion of the machine gun] on my back. When I jumped over, I was lucky. It was only about four and a half feet deep. My feet hit the ground. I took out my trench knife and cut the straps to the back pack. I came up and started swimming at an angle away from the craft. When I hit the beach, I only had my .45-caliber pistol at my side....

I saw a lot of dead bodies floating in the water, as many bodies as on the beach. The first wave didn't make it 25 feet. I was very innocent, I never saw anyone get killed before, and all of a sudden there were guys getting killed all around me.

I made it to the shore and found an overturned vehicle, I didn't know if it was theirs or ours. I stayed behind it the rest of the day. I was soaking wet and cold and wishing my helmet was 20 times bigger. I never did find a helmet that fit right. I was thinking to myself, "You stupid fool, what did you get yourself into?" I volunteered for this?

You don't hear much about it, but it was the US Navy that saved us. When we were pinned down, there were five US destroyers with 5 inch cannons that started going parallel to the beach, back and forth, knocking out the German pillboxes and machine-gun nests....

I stayed behind the vehicle. I didn't know where to go. I wished I was home. I was a corporal, and eventually a lieutenant found me. He was from our company but a different squad. He asked me, "Where's the rest of your company?" I told him "I'm it." He found seven or eight of us. We regrouped and made our way down the beach. I wasn't much help because the rifle companies were using 60mm mortars, and I was trained on the 81mm

We hid behind a seawall where we were safe from the machine gun fire. We got tanks to help us. Then we went to an assembly area. My outfit never did get all the way back together.

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We were the second or third wave. There were more waves after us. They got the foothold on the beach. By nightfall we finally took over the beach. The tanks took out the machine-gun nests so [the Germans] pulled back. After the fighting was over and they secured the beach, they were already setting up kitchens. There were a helluva lot of guys to feed. Most of the guys wanted coffee—at least I did. They had beans and wieners and hash browns….

They took us survivors from three different companies and formed us into quick squads. Some of the companies lost 70 percent of their men. The rifle companies got it even worse than us. I was given a field promotion to sergeant by process of elimination.

I ended up in the Third Army with General [George] Patton. I hardly ever got shot at again after D-Day. I was with a heavy artillery company. My guys would get killed by artillery fire, or sometimes the Germans would leave a sniper after they retreated, but they usually went after the officers.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

"I never saw anyone get killed before," Gates admitted. D-Day changed that. This GI, whose body washed up against an obstacle on Omaha, was one of at least 2,500 Americans killed on D-Day.

When we finally broke out of the beach, everything moved pretty fast. Lots of times we didn't know what was going on. I'd get letters from my mom, and my father would add little notes and he'd tell me what was going on. He would know where we were at better than *we* did. He would add little maps and everything. The Third Army would sometimes move 50 miles a day.

We had bad communications from the ground to the air. Lots of guys got killed by friendly fire from our own planes. When I heard the planes, I'd try to find myself a hole in the ground to hide in.

We broke through the German line [the Siegfried Line defending Germany's western border]. General Patton took over. His motto was "Go get 'em." He didn't care about how many casualties he had. He'd rather have 500 die in one day than 100 a day for five days. He always wanted to gain some ground. He always wanted to attack. Patton was always around, right in the midst of things, not like some of these other generals. I respected him, but I didn't like him.

The winter in Europe was supposed to be the worst winter in 70 years. We lost more guys to frostbite and frozen limbs than to gunfire. We'd try to find a barn where they kept cattle to hole up in. One time we pulled up to one that had 10 to 15 horses. It was quite warm inside. I only needed two blankets to sleep that night. It was below zero outside, but the horses generated a lot of heat.

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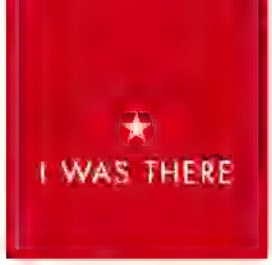

I didn't sleep in my sleeping bag. I cut off the bottom and wore it like a parka. They were dangerous to sleep in. Sometimes guys would roll over in their sleep and get trapped or run over by a jeep.

Most of the good winter gear didn't make it to the front. I saw all the good stuff when I was on a 72 hour pass to Paris. The soldiers there, and even the French civilians, were wearing the good stuff....

We ended up in the Saar Valley [in Germany's southwest corner].... We were in Germany and they started fighting harder than when we were in France. They got stiff backs

Then they came back after us. When the Battle of the Bulge started, they pulled us out of there and moved us up by Luxembourg. We helped free the 101st Airborne when they were surrounded at Bastogne [in Belgium]....

After a week and a half we stymied the German attack. Then it was our job to cut Germany in half. We went the southern way. We skirted the Alps, while the English went to the north. We captured a lot of German towns and cities, like Munich.

At the end we had Germans surrendering to us like mad. We didn't know what to do with them. They'd be begging us for something to eat. Well, we didn't like our K-ration lunches; we'd only eat the breakfasts and dinners. So when we were driving by them, I'd dig into the hold and throw them a few lunches

The civilians were beat into the ground. There was no fight left in them. They were glad to see us. Then they knew the fighting was over. But at first they were afraid of us. They were told we were going to rape all their women and kill their children. But we fed them and gave the kids chocolate bars....

After we captured Munich we kept going fast. By then we were mechanized, we were set up in a half track truck. When we wanted to fire our mortar, we put a big metal plate on the ground and put the mortar and its sight on it. We always used observers. We seldom saw who we were shelling.... Our 81mm mortar was almost as powerful as the Germans' 88mm cannon. It would go up and freefall on them. We didn't see where it landed most of the time.

By then they took away our heavy water cooled machine gun. The half-track had two .50-caliber machine guns mounted on it. We used them mostly against the German airplanes that tried to strafe us....

People would ask me how many Germans I killed in the war. I only killed

COURTESY OF WILBERT GATES

Before D-Day, Gates looks sharp as a private at Camp Shelby, Mississippi, where he trained with mortars and heavy machine guns. He wears a 65th Division patch.

one German that I knew of, and he was 16. Right after we took Regensburg, near the Austrian border, I was on night watch. I'd sleep under the half track. In the middle of the night, we were overrun. I heard people running by, so I rolled over and fired my .45 twice. The next morning the driver said, "Gates, you got somebody." I was afraid it was one of us. He was wearing a brand new uniform, and I could tell it was [my shot] by the angle [from which] he was killed. I shot him right up under his cheek through the top of his head. My buddy pulled out his papers and said, "Sarge, he just turned 16." That shook me up. I said, "They got us fighting kids." A captain I didn't know came by and asked me, "How old are you, Sergeant?" I said, "I'm 19." He said, "Kids killing kids."

We had followed the Danube River through Germany all the way to Linz, Austria. We just got there when they told us to stand down: "The war is over."

But...the war against Japan was still going on. By then we'd been transferred into the 9th Infantry Division, and we heard through the grapevine that we were going to the Pacific. I thought, "Oh, great." By then I wasn't mad at anyone anymore. I just wanted to go home.

But I never did go to the Pacific. I spent the last six months in Germany, guarding 26,000 SS troops in the Dachau prison camp.... The regular German army guys were just like us, a frightened, miserable group of guys. But the SS guys were different. Even their own people were scared of them. They dressed in black uniforms and wore a lapel pin with the skull and crossbones. We had an unwritten rule from Patton in the Battle of the Bulge: if the SS men tried to surrender, we'd tell them to keep fighting because we were going to kill them....

Once in a while at Dachau I would be the sergeant of the guard. I had to go through the prisoners' barracks and spot-check for contraband. I didn't carry a gun, but I had two big Polish soldiers with me and they carried rifles. I hated that duty. [The camp officials] sometimes executed the prisoners. I hated that too.

Finally, when they were sending me home, I was going through Le Havre, France. I see this big luxury liner like the *Queen Mary* and I thought I would be going home on that. But no, that was for all the war brides.... They put me on a 390-foot troop carrier.... I was seasick all the way home, just like when I went there.

I came home to Camp Kilmer, New Jersey.... Our first night they were supposed to give us a steak dinner, but I wanted a bacon and eggs breakfast. The next night, I got the steak.

After a couple days they put us on a train to Camp Atterbury, Indiana. The train went right through Cleveland, but it didn't stop. They gave me $200 spending money and sent me some checks later. The first thing I did when I got a check was to buy some new clothes, because I grew out of all my old ones....

I came home in May but I was on a two-year enlistment, so I was still getting paid until September—for living at home.... Even though I was a veteran, I still had to register for the draft, because I was never drafted. When I registered, I asked the girl if they could still draft me. She said yes, but she was going to classify me 5 A.... She said, "They'll take you after they take the women and children."

I was 20 years old when I came back home. I went to a bar and tried to buy a beer. The waitress asked me how old I was. She wouldn't serve me because you had to be 21. But the owner knew my dad and he said, "Give him anything he wants."

...The smartest thing I did was to *not* join the army reserves. A lot of guys did to get a few bucks every month. Once the Korean War started, they grabbed all those guys. I had a recruiter try to get me to reenlist.... When I told him no, he gave me a hard time. He asked me, "Don't you want to help your country?" I said, "I already did."

...I came out of the war physically okay but it screwed up my mind a little bit.

After the war Gates went back to the National Engraving Company, where he had worked as a delivery boy. The owner had promised him a job when he returned, and he kept his word, teaching him to repair printing presses. Gates worked his way up to shop foreman and retired after 46 years.

When Gates was 24 years old he married Irene, a friend's divorced sister. He adopted her daughter and went on to have five more children with Irene. Today he has 13 grandkids and 25 great grandkids.

Irene died last June after 65 years of marriage, and Gates now lives with his son Michael. Michael took him to see Saving Private Ryan *in a theater when it first came out, but Gates walked out during the opening scene. "He couldn't take all the killing," Michael said. "Too many bad memories."*

Gates has never before told the story about killing the 16-year-old German, not even to his children. ★

WILBERT "BILL" GATES *is 89 and lives in Elyria, Ohio.* PETER JEDICK *is a Cleveland-based freelance writer and the author of* The West Tech Terrorist, *a novel set in the early days of World War II.*

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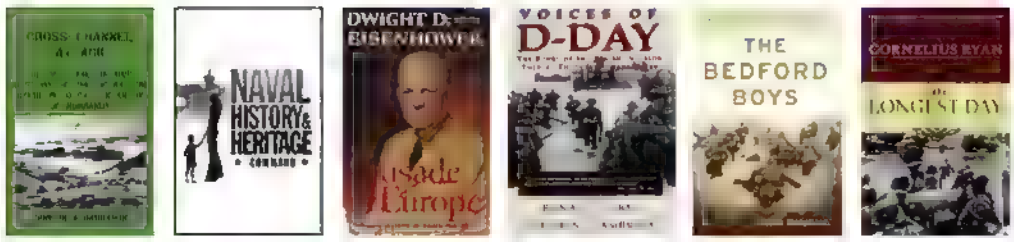

Six Must-Read D-Day Books

selected by Michael Edwards

Cross-Channel Attack

by Gordon A. Harrison, 1951

This volume of the US Department of the Army's official history of World War II, a series unofficially known as the Green Books for their distinctive covers, is probably the cornerstone history of D-Day. Gordon A. Harrison served in General George Patton's Third Army as a historical officer during the war and says up front that his book is American-centric in its examination of the Normandy operation. Though not without flaws, it has stood the test of time.

The Invasion of Normandy: Operation Neptune

Never published in book form but available online at www.history.navy.mil/library/online/comnaveu/comnaveu_index.htm, this volume of the series United States Navy Administration in World War II, United States Naval Forces Europe, focuses on the US Navy's role in D-Day. The insight into US naval operations supplied here is essential to any study of the landings. Unfortunately, pages are missing from the online manuscript, but included are valuable data tables and outlines of command structure and landing force assembly points. Also useful are tables detailing the composition of the various naval task forces assigned to support the landings. An editor's note from 2006 explains how the manuscript was put together.

Crusade in Europe: A Personal Account of World War II

by Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1948

Written by none other than the commander of the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF), the man most responsible for the D-Day landings, this book covers not only D-Day, but the entire American experience of World War II, from Dwight Eisenhower's perspective. The prose here is workmanlike, with less dash and verve than the writing in later books by other high-ranking officers, but the view is invaluable to any student of the war, with insights into the difficulties of inter-Allied relations. The book doesn't delve deeply into combat operations, but instead focuses on Eisenhower's command style as he worked with Allied political leaders and his subordinate commanders—often very difficult tasks

Voices of D-Day: The Story of the Allied Invasion Told by Those Who Were There

by Ronald E. Drez, 1996

A military historian and top tour guide for Stephen Ambrose Tours, Ronald E. Drez is very familiar with war studies. When the University of New Orleans' Eisenhower Center for American Studies, under the direction of the late Stephen Ambrose, sought to collect the oral histories of D-Day veterans from all US service branches and non-US Allied forces, Ron traveled extensively to conduct interviews in homes and at reunions. His book's bare-bones construction is intended to keep anything from interfering with the veterans' words. These oral histories of ground, air, and naval action were the beginnings of the collection at the National World War II Museum (formerly the National D-Day Museum).

The Bedford Boys: One American Town's Ultimate D-Day Sacrifice

by Alex Kershaw, 2004

Alex Kershaw has written a number of books on WWII subjects. His experience as a journalist is evident in his writing style in *The Bedford Boys*, making an informative book very readable. The book follows the members of A Company, 116th Infantry Regiment, 29th Infantry Division, one of the units tasked with taking Omaha Beach on D-Day. Many of the soldiers in this National Guard unit were residents of Bedford, Virginia, and 19 of them were killed in the landings. Kershaw succeeds best at providing the personal side of the action, at finding the human faces in the fog of war. His is an emotionally charged story of American soldiers at war and of the effects of that war on the American home front. It's a pairing not often seen in war histories.

The Longest Day: June 6, 1944

by Cornelius Ryan, 1959

Interviews with participants make up the lion's share of this classic book on D-Day that was adapted into a huge Hollywood spectacle with a cast of A-list stars in 1962. The interviews come from a cross-section of D-Day participants and witnesses, soldier and civilian alike, American, British, German, and French. The book's

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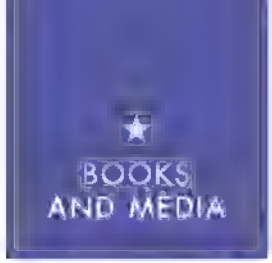

scope is huge, but Ryan manages an effective and readable account of the massive operation. (Ryan also wrote two other books on World War II: *The Last Battle*, about the Battle of Berlin, and *A Bridge Too Far*, about the Battle of Arnhem; the latter, like *The Longest Day*, was made into a successful film.) ★

MICHAEL EDWARDS, *a long-time book reviewer for* America in WWII, *is a former research associate of the University of New Orleans' Eisenhower Center for American Studies*

Neptune: The Allied Invasion of Europe and the D-Day Landings
by Craig L. Symonds, Oxford University Press, 440 pages, $29.95.

IN RETROSPECT, Allied success on the shores of Normandy seems unsurprising, almost predictable. After all, the Allies had spent months softening the Germans, blocking their reinforcements, and blinding them with disinformation. Yet no war follows plans, and enemies seldom play the parts assigned them by their opponents' strategists and tacticians. The successful invasion of June 1944 was a hard-fought, hard-won victory, the fruit of years of coalition politics, logistical wizardry, and bitter lessons. In *Neptune*, Craig Symonds presents an extremely satisfying, clear account of how the proposal to invade Nazi-held France in an assault across the English Channel from southern England evolved over those years from pipedream to actual invasion.

Symonds discerns the beginnings of Operation Neptune (the codename for what became known as D-Day) in the first Anglo-American meetings after Pearl Harbor, when disputes arose over the priorities and mechanics for taking the fight to the enemy. Shipping and transport for armies and their gear were quickly recognized as critical. So, too, was the need for a single point of command. These would remain problematic throughout Neptune's planning. Early in the war the British held the strategic reins, based on their clearly superior experience. Over a short time, this would change.

Fortunately, the initial impulse for an immediate invasion of Europe was deflected. Based on the experiences of invading North Africa and Sicily, planners realized that any precipitous landings in Europe would be catastrophic, as proven by the ill-conceived Dieppe Raid of August 1942. These showcased the need for superior troop delivery, supply operations, fire support, and combat training. The February 1943 failures at Tunisia's Kasserine Pass showed that American troops needed better training, more experience, and stronger leadership to succeed (even though much of the US brass would eventually regard the North African campaign as merely maneuvers with live ammunition).

Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin was a silent partner in Neptune. The Soviets contributed nothing but continually demanded fast action to relieve the immense pressure the Germans were putting on them. The period 1942–1943 was the heyday of Soviet insecurity, when every discussion came down to fixing a start date for the Anglo-American invasion. The Soviets nodded with approval at the victories in Africa and Sicily, but continued to press for an entry into Europe, which they justifiably saw as vital to easing its burdens of battle.

Symonds smoothly integrates an astonishing range of characters, from familiar ones such as Franklin Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, and Dwight Eisenhower to the more obscure such as Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov (who arrived at the White House with a loaded gun, a loaf of bread, and a sausage), Frederick Morgan (a British officer who planned much of the Normandy invasion), and Andrew Higgins (foremost designer of landing craft, who had mastered his trade by selling speedboats to smugglers).

Every soldier who invaded France was trained, shipped, stored, equipped, and then transported to battle. Symonds very skillfully traces all the dependencies each step represents, from arranging food and ammunition to clearing the air of Luftwaffe planes to assuring safe trans-Atlantic passage. The phenomenal efficiency and ingenuity of Eisenhower's supply chief, General John C.H. Lee (otherwise regarded as a pompous martinet), show how quickly entire camps could be set up.

Symonds's enthusiasm for vivid, everyday details of war is striking. He has a fine grasp of memorable detail and the world of planning it reflects, as his description of one soldier's kit shows: "Each member of an NCDU [Naval Combat Demolition Unit] team carried a double-sided canvas bag, much like those used by newspaper boys back home, though instead of newspaper they were filled with sixty pounds of C-2 explosives divided up into two-pound blocks." Reading *Neptune* constantly reminded me of the old saying that small generals talk about the enemy, and big generals talk about logistics.

Symonds succeeds at capturing the play of personalities and strategic issues involved in prosecuting Neptune, but he does so without neglecting life on the front line. The invasion itself occupies a smaller section of the book, but thanks to Symonds's keen eye for detail and incident, even readers of Max Hastings, John Keegan, and Cornelius Ryan will find much to enjoy.

Looking back from 70 years later, one can only view this story with awe. No email. No networks. No PowerPoints. No digital communications. Yet despite living in digital prehistory, US Army Chief of Staff General George Marshall, Eisenhower, British Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery, and their partners were able to envision, plan, provision, and execute the colossus of Neptune, down to how many sticks of gum each soldier carried. The correct resources in the correct proportions were applied to the correct targets, and the invasion succeeded. Clearly, there are many lessons we can learn from these masters of war, and Symonds's rewarding book unpacks the immense and intricate preparation that was indispensable for success.

THOMAS MULLEN
Flemington, New Jersey

The Burning Shore: How Hitler's U-Boats Brought World War II to America
by Ed Offley, Basic Books, 320 pages, $27.99.

WITHIN THE PAGES of *The Burning Shore: How Hitler's U-Boats Brought World War II to America*, Ed Offley tells the story of the Battle of

the Atlantic, which raged from late December 1941 until early July 1942. During that time, writes Offley, the German *Ubootwaffe*, or U boat Force, "initiated an all-out war against American merchant shipping" along the eastern seaboard of the United States.

Vice Admiral Karl Dönitz, commander in chief of the U boat Force, knew that if he could strangle Britain by cutting off her lifeline of supplies and materiel from the United States, the America Anglo alliance would be compromised. More importantly, without Britain the Allies would lose a jumping-off point for an invasion into German-held Europe.

It was a solid strategy. In the aftermath of the Pearl Harbor attack, a large portion of the US Atlantic Fleet was transferred to the Pacific to supplement the losses there and to battle the imminent Japanese threat in those waters. By the end of January 1942, the Atlantic Fleet had only five battleships, two aircraft carriers, and 14 cruisers left.

Meanwhile, in early 1942 the waters off the US eastern seaboard teemed with "scores of merchantmen [that] traveled independently through those unprotected waters," Offley writes. Within that expanse of ocean, the richest hunting grounds for German sub commanders were the waters off North Carolina, specifically the area beyond Cape Hatteras, halfway down the Outer Banks. To avoid the hazardous weather often found there, "merchant ships were forced to thread a 30- to 50-mile-wide needle between the Outer Banks and the Gulf Stream. The German U-boat sailors stalking those cargo-laden targets favored this area as a lucrative target area."

By the first week of July 1942, the Germans had sunk 45 merchant ships off the Outer Banks, totaling 262,137 gross registered tons, while losing only 4 lost U-boats and 161 submariners. To combat this threat, the US military established Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point in eastern North Carolina as a base for anti-submarine air patrols. From this midway point between Hampton Roads, Virginia, and Charleston, South Carolina, the US Army Air Forces began sending out patrols of Douglas A-20 Havoc and Lockheed A-29 Hudson light bombers and Douglas B-18 Bolo medium bombers in mid May 1942.

The Major's War: Worth Fighting For
By E M Owsiany

A story of loyalty, courage, and trust among soldiers, is as sweeping as it is intimate, exploring men who must learn to depend on each other implicitly as friends and comrades as war tears their lives—and world—apart. A book of uncommon depth and suspense, The Major's War: Worth Fighting For is an unflinching look at the lives of the men who fought in WWII and the price they paid for their country—and each other

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Both the battle and Offley's book culminate with the sinking of *U-701*, a Type VIIC U-boat skippered by Lieutenant Horst Degen. On July 7, 1942, Lieutenant Harry Kane set out on a patrol from Cherry Point in an A-29 Hudson. A little after midday Degen ordered his sub to surface to cleanse the foul air that had built up inside the vessel. At 2:12 P.M., Kane spotted a shadow in the waters off Cape Hatteras, approximately 30 miles offshore. That shadow was Degen's *U-701*.

In a matter of minutes Kane and his crew dropped three 325-pound Mark XVII depth charges and successfully sank the enemy U-boat. Kane became the first army air forces pilot to achieve that distinction in American waters. The bomber crew threw lifejackets and an inflatable raft to the German submariners and continued to circle the area to track their drift. The Americans sent dispatches, "Please send other aircraft to 393376, we are running low on gas. There are men in the water. Send help." Kane and his crew remained in the area until the bomber's fuel became dangerously low. Despite their efforts, it took days before the surviving Germans were rescued.

After the sinking of *U-701*, prowling U-boats found conditions along the American seaboard had changed. Offley writes, "Heavily defended coastal convoys and saturation coverage by land-based air patrols" meant that the "solitary targets that had made the 'happy time' [of U-boats hunting American ships] so exceptional were now a distant memory."

Not long after the attack, Degen and Kane briefly met face-to-face. "'Congratulations,' Degen said in clear English. 'Good attack.'" Offley doesn't end the story there. Decades after the war, Kane and Degen began corresponding and eventually met in Germany. Kane also later initiated the effort to find the sunken *U-701*, an endeavor that eventually proved successful.

Offley skillfully combines overall context of the war at large with the minute particulars of the smaller events that make for richly told history. He thoughtfully includes supplemental information such as a detailed cutaway diagram of a Type VIIC U-boat and a comparison chart of naval officer ranks in the American, British, and German

THEATER OF WAR

The Monuments Men

Directed by George Clooney, written by George Clooney and Grant Heslov from the book by Robert M. Edsel and Bret Witter, starring George Clooney, Matt Damon, Bill Murray, Cate Blanchett, John Goodman, Jean Dujardin, Hugh Bonneville, Bob Balaban, 2014, 118 minutes, color, PG-13.

IN *THE MONUMENTS MEN*, actor-director George Clooney combines the infectious fun of his *Ocean's Eleven* movies with the seriousness of *Saving Private Ryan*. Based on a true story of American art experts who crossed war-torn Europe to recover priceless art stolen by the Nazis, the movie could have been called *Saving Western Civilization*.

That's pretty much how art historian Frank Stokes (Clooney) sees his mission. After a sequence showing Belgian priests attempting to save the priceless Ghent Altarpiece, we see Stokes briefing President Franklin Roosevelt about the threat Nazi Germany poses to Europe's artistic heritage. German soldiers have been systematically looting museums and private collections, all part of Adolf Hitler's scheme to open a colossal Führer Museum in his native Austria. Stokes receives the assignment to lead a team of art scholars into Europe, where they will follow the invading Allied forces, liberating artwork from Nazi clutches.

First, Stokes must recruit his team. He signs up a disparate bunch: art historian James Granger (Matt Damon), architect Richard Campbell (Bill Murray), sculptor Walter Garfield (John Goodman), theatrical director Preston Savitz (Bob Balaban), and Frenchman Jean Claude Clermont (Jean Dujardin). Another recruit, Englishman Donald Jeffries (Hugh Bonneville), has been seeking refuge in the bottle after a financial scandal. Seeing the mission as a form of redemption, Jeffries becomes especially concerned with saving a Michelangelo Madonna and Child in Bruges.

The art rescuers get their first taste of the difficulties they'll face when they come ashore at Normandy and receive no cooperation from military higher-ups, who fail to see the mission's value. Scrounging will be the order of the day.

Unfortunately for the story's cohesion, the Monuments Men split into separate teams. Granger heads to Paris, where he must win over Claire Simone (Cate Blanchett), the daunting secretary of an art museum that has been looted by odious Nazi Viktor Stahl. She suspects that the Americans, like the Russians approaching from the east, want France's treasures for themselves. While Granger dickers with Simone, the other men bicker and banter across Europe, seeking hiding places where the Nazis have stashed their loot.

The result is an amiable ramble across Europe's front lines, punctuated by occasional action. Clooney's film is an almost self-consciously old-fashioned war movie,

navies of World War II. *The Burning Shore* is rich in detail and a gripping read—a well-written, well-researched narrative that will leave readers well satisfied.

ALLYSON PATTON
Gettysburg, Pennsylvania

The Most Dangerous Man in America: The Making of Douglas MacArthur
by Mark Perry, Basic Books, 416 pages, $29.99

GENERAL DOUGLAS MACARTHUR has, at best, a very checkered reputation. In *The Most Dangerous Man in America*, author Mark Perry cites an informal Internet poll that listed MacArthur as America's worst commander, ahead of Benedict Arnold! The common view of MacArthur is that he was arrogant, imperious, longwinded, disdainful of civilian authority, and prone to needlessly wasting the lives of his men. Most people believe MacArthur was so vain that he had multiple takes of his return to the Philippines filmed (not true, Perry points out; that was Lieutenant General George S. Patton, Jr., in Sicily).

Perry argues that while the common perceptions are rooted in truth, the facts of MacArthur's prewar and WWII service reveal one of America's greatest commanders. A good proportion of MacArthur's success was due to his complex, mutually supportive relationship with President Franklin Roosevelt. Yet the president and the high ranking general got off to a very rocky start. *The Most Dangerous Man in America* begins in 1932 with Roosevelt as a presidential candidate talking on the phone with Louisiana politician Huey Long. Among other topics, the two of them discussed President Herbert Hoover's forcible evacuation of protesting WWI veterans, the "Bonus Marchers," from their camp in Washington, DC. MacArthur, then army chief of staff, personally oversaw the eviction. It is from this phone call that the book derives its title. Roosevelt told Long that MacArthur was "the most dangerous man in America."

Surprisingly, Roosevelt did not fire MacArthur after taking office in 1933. Despite their opposing political viewpoints and the controversy surrounding MacArthur, the two men forged a genuinely friendly, though often contentious, working relationship. Perry spends the first two chapters of the book exploring how the two men played off of one other to navigate the politics of the Great Depression.

With Roosevelt's help, MacArthur won political concessions that kept Congress from cutting the army's budget too much. In return, MacArthur put the army's full support behind Roosevelt's Civilian Conservation Corps. The CCC provided jobs for hundreds of thousands of young men, and incidentally provided a lot of training in logistics to army officers.

Following his stint as army chief of staff, in late 1935 MacArthur accepted a position as a military advisor to the Philippine government. He retired from the army in 1937 but remained in the Philippines as a civilian advisor, even though army officers such as Dwight Eisenhower continued to work for him. With the start of World War

with a vibe borrowed from 1960s ensemble films such as *Kelly's Heroes*—but without the cynicism. There are good guys and bad guys, noble deaths, a shot of redemption, some comic relief, appealing star performances without a great deal of character depth, and some fine location work.

Although the script is filled with wry banter, it's not all fun and games. Weightier issues peek around the corners, especially when the team searches a mine filled with artwork and discovers barrels of gold fillings taken from Jews killed in concentration camps.

Without giving away too much, the Monuments Men do suffer some losses, leading to a scene where President Harry Truman asks Stokes if a piece of art is worth a life. The answer seems to be yes, provided the person making the sacrifice thinks so.

It's not likely anyone in a future war would sacrifice his or her life to save *The Monuments Men*, but it is a reasonably diverting movie that casts light on an interesting bit of WWII history. While not a great film, *The Monuments Men* does have good intentions.

—TOM HUNTINGTON
Camp Hill, Pennsylvania

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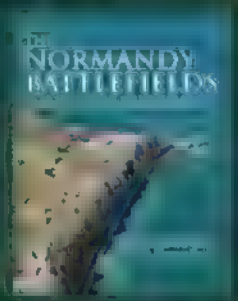

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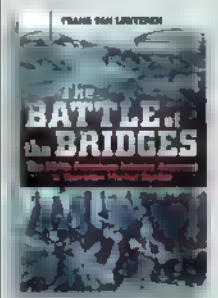

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II, US Army Chief of Staff George Marshall and Secretary of War Henry Stimson recommended to Roosevelt that MacArthur be reinstated to active duty and made commanding general for the Far East command. In late July 1940, MacArthur was again an army general.

Readers with a nodding familiarity with WWII history know what happened next. The Japanese launched multiple overwhelming and nearly simultaneous attacks on Hawaii, the Philippines, Hong Kong, and British Malaya on December 7–9, 1941. The Philippines fell in May 1942, and MacArthur escaped to Australia to rebuild and start fighting back in the Pacific. The eventual American victory was due in large part to MacArthur's brilliance as both a commander and a strategist.

The Most Dangerous Man in America draws its material from first hand accounts—as captured in diaries, interviews, letters, papers, and similar sources—from the participants themselves. The result is a far more nuanced, complete, and sympathetic picture of MacArthur than today's popular conception of him.

MacArthur *was* imperious, opinionated, and disdainful of authority, but he was also a master of both grand and operational strategy. He chose his field commanders well and supported them so they could be successful. He was innovative, creating an integrated air, sea, and land command on a massive scale. More importantly, he did so by building a strong relationship with the navy despite interservice rivalries and personal enmity with Admiral Ernest King, the overall head of the US Navy. MacArthur's gracious acceptance of the Japanese surrender demonstrated his basic humanity.

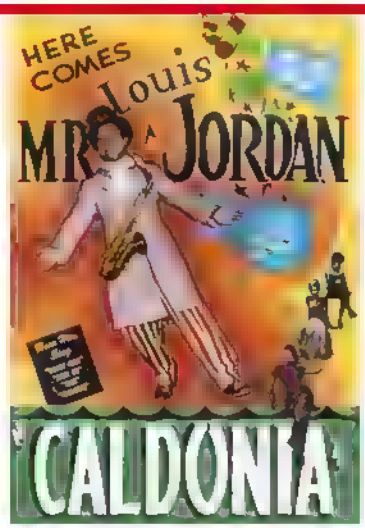
If there's one complaint about *The Most Dangerous Man in America*, it is that its focus is perhaps too narrow. The book does a wonderful job confronting the common understanding of MacArthur's WWII career, but I was left wanting more. How well did MacArthur handle the occupation of Japan? What exactly *did* happen during the Korean War that led President Harry Truman to relieve MacArthur of command? After reading this book, I suspect there is more to the story than the conventional wisdom

The Most Dangerous Man in America is an apt title, though MacArthur was far more dangerous to the Japanese than to Roosevelt's political career. Perry does an excellent job showing the truth about MacArthur—that his flaws were not as great, and his genius was much greater, than commonly remembered.

DREW AMES
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

★ 78 RPM

Rock without Noise



THE GRANDFATHER of Rock and Roll didn't care much for rock and roll. As he got older, fifties bands cut into his job opportunities, and he never thought they added much to what his own jump blues had already accomplished in the forties.

"More noise, more amplification...," Louis Jordan said. "Noise can hide a gang of faults. That's just the reason why amplification got bigger—because so many people made records who couldn't even sing."

Louis Jordan didn't need noise. He had plenty of the ingredients of successful pop music. He'd started with a jazz foundation, learned on the sax from his dad back in Arkansas, and stirred in energy, rhythmic feel, a bawdy sense of humor, and love of the spotlight.

He first served up his personal, slow-cooked musical stew with a group of his own in 1939. Wanting something that made him stand out, he brought in a tympani player and emphasized that oddity by naming the band the Tympani Five. That gimmick, plus the talent, worked. The group got booked by the same large halls as Duke Ellington's big band.

The WWII years kicked off a long run for Jordan dominating the rhythm and blues charts (in the days when the industry referred to the genre as "race records"). With "I'm Gonna Leave You at the Outskirts of Town" in late 1942, he hit the charts for the first time and sold a million records. After that came "What's the Use of Getting Sober," which climbed to number one and became the first of 18 number one hits for Jordan in the forties.

In April 1945 Jordan's soon to be classic "Caldonia" climbed to number one on the R&B charts and crossed over to the mainstream charts to reach number six. A write-up on the song in *Billboard* magazine featured the first ever use of the term "rock and roll music." As always, Jordan's humor was there (as was a trace of misogyny), with a line like "Caldonia, Caldonia, what makes your big head so hard?" But there was also the more sober "Mama said, son, keep away from that woman—she's gonna take all your money."

In the end, a woman did take Jordan's money—Fleecie Moore, that is, his wife, whose name was on the copyright of his songs. She cashed in on that when they got divorced after a brief marriage, and after stabbing him on two different occasions. She took his money, but she couldn't take away the fame and respect he had earned. Rock giants like Bo Diddley, Ray Charles, and Bill Haley all named him as an influence. In 1987, a dozen years after he died, he was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

—CARL ZEBROWSKI
editor of *America in WWII*

WWII EVENTS

CALIFORNIA • **May 26, Palm Springs:** Annual Memorial Day Flower Drop and Air Fair. Service with fly-by and drop of 3,000 red and white carnations from a B-25 Mitchell bomber. Flower drop at 1 P.M. Palm Springs Air Museum, 745 North Gene Autry Trail. 760-778-6262. www.palmspringsairmuseum.org

GEORGIA • **Apr. 26–27, Peachtree City:** WWII Heritage Days. Historic aircraft, antique cars, vintage military vehicles, reenactors portraying Allied and Axis troops, 1940s hangar dance, opening ceremony recognizing local WWII veterans. 9 A.M.–4 P.M. Hosted by the Commemorative Air Force Dixie Wing. Historical Airpower Facility, Atlanta Regional Airport–Falcon Field, 1200 Echo Court, Falcon Field. 678-364-1110. www.wwiidays.org

ILLINOIS • **June 4, Chicago:** 70th anniversary of the capture of *U-505*. A variety of events, including the final reunion of US Navy Task Group 22.3, which captured the sub. The Museum of Science and Industry, 5700 South Lake Shore Drive. 773-684-1414. www.msichicago.org

LOUISIANA • **Ongoing, New Orleans:** "From Barbed Wire to Battlefields: Japanese American Experiences in WWII." Exhibit. Artifacts, oral histories, and images from the US wartime Japanese internment. The National WWII Museum, 945 Magazine Street. 504-528-1944. www.nationalww2museum.org

NEW JERSEY • **May 17, Cape May:** Armed Forces Day ceremony at World War II Lookout Tower. Patriotic music, "Taps" and ceremonial folding of the flag by veterans, presentation on women's role in World War II, recognition of WWII veterans, remembrance of deceased veterans. 11 A.M. Hosted by Friends of the World War II Lookout Tower. World War II Lookout Tower, Sunset Boulevard. 609-884-5404. www.capemaymac.org

NORTH CAROLINA • **May 17, Wilmington:** "Showboat—Systems and Design." One-hour presentation on the WWII battleship USS *North Carolina (BB-55)*, followed by a two-hour onboard exploration. 1–4 P.M. Participants must be 18 years old or older. Admission fee. Register by May 15. Battleship Memorial, 1 Battleship Road. 910-251-5797. www.battleshipnc.com

PENNSYLVANIA • **May 10–11, Altoona:** Baker Mansion WWII History Weekend. WWII skirmish simulations, WWII veterans, lectures and book signings by historians, showing of the 1963 WWII movie *The Great Escape*. Blair County Historical Society, 3419 Oak Lane. 814-942-3916. www.blairhistory.org

June 6–8, Reading: 24th Annual World War II Weekend. WWII aircraft flying and on display, special guest WWII veterans, living history, encampment, skirmish simulations. Mid-Atlantic Air Museum, 11 Museum Drive. 610-372-7333. www.maam.org

TENNESSEE • **June 1–4, Nashville:** Anzio Beachhead WWII Veterans Reunion. Banquets, reminiscences, tours of Nashville. Veterans, families, and the public are invited to what is likely the group's final reunion. Holiday Inn Opryland Airport Hotel, 2200 Elm Hill Pike. 631-691-5002. www.anziobeachheadveterans.com

WEST VIRGINIA • **June 27–29, Rowlesburg:** 10th Annual World War II Living History Weekend. Reenactors, period equipment, veterans, militaria, swing dance. Free. Rowlesburg Park, Route 72. 304-329-1240. www.rowlesburg.info/WWII_weekend

Please call the numbers provided or visit websites to check on dates, times, locations, and other information before planning trips.

COMING SOON

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

US troops march to Saint-Lô in July 1944 ready for a fight with the town's German occupiers.

ON TO GERMANY

The Allies had taken the Normandy beaches. Now they had to get past the German forces at Saint-Lô.

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AMERICA IN WWII COLLECTION

Jack Matthews of the 314th Infantry Regiment was drafted during high school and supported troops in the Battle of the Bulge. He completed basic training at Arkansas's Camp Robinson, shown here in a 1940s postcard.

ON A TROOP SHIP TO ENGLAND, Jack Matthews was beginning to wonder whether he'd ever eat anything but soup again. Then he arrived in Glasgow, Scotland. "We were met by Gray Ladies—the American Red Cross—and they gave us a box that was about half the size of a shoebox with food in it for us to eat," he recalls. "I bit into a cold piece of meat that turned out to be rabbit." It was strange, but he didn't complain. At least it wasn't soup.

Matthews had been drafted into the US Army in the summer of 1944. Uprooted from his bucolic hometown of Bloomfield, Missouri, before he started his senior year of high school, he was dropped into a pair of standard-issue combat boots some 150 miles away at Jefferson Barracks. He completed basic training at Camp Robinson in Arkansas and left for Great Britain.

In January 1945, Matthews crossed the English Channel and made his way through France with the 79th Infantry Division, 314th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Battalion, a reinforcement battalion. At Haguenau, German forces fired relentlessly into the darkness while GIs scrambled to burrow deeper into their foxholes. "If you ever tried to dig a foxhole in frozen ground, it's tough," Matthews says. "But you learn to dig quickly when you're being attacked."

In the coming months, the 314th supported forces in the Battle of the Bulge and fought in France, Czechoslovakia, and Germany. Matthews earned a Bronze Star and a Combat Infantry Badge. When the war in Europe ended in 1945, he was offered reenlistment, but decided against it. Discharged in 1946, he returned home to finish high school.

In the 1960s Matthews moved to Jefferson City, Missouri, and eventually got a federal job with Veterans' Employment and Training Services. Now 87, he still lives in Jeff City and devotes time to veterans' causes. ★

Submitted by JEREMY P. ÄMICK *of Silver Star Families of America. Adapted by* HEATHER BURDSALL, *editorial intern of* America in WWII.

Send your GIs photo and story to editor@americainwwii.com or to: GIs, America in WWII, 4711 Queen Ave., Ste. 202, Harrisburg, PA 17109

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Dwight D. Eisenhower
6 June 1944

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